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TWO

LETTERS

TO THE

RIGHT HONOURABLE

LORD BYRON,

IN ANSWER TO HIS

LORDSHIP'S LETTER TO **** ******, ON THE REV. WM. L. BOWLES'S STRICTURES ON THE LIFE AND WRITINGS OF POPE:

MORE PARTICULARLY ON THE QUESTION,

Whether POETRY *be more immediately indebted to what is* SUBLIME *or* BEAUTIFUL *in the Works of* NATURE, *or the Works of* ART?

BY THE REVEREND WM. L. BOWLES.

" He that plays at BOWLS, must expect RUBBERS."

OLD PROVERB.

" NATURAM expellas FURCA, tamen usque recurret."

HORACE.

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ADVERTISEMENT.

I Trust Lord BYRON *will excuse me for having made somewhat free with the singular Motto to his book. It is,* "*I will play at* BOWLS "*with the* SUN *and the* MOON."—Old Song.

A "certain Family" *had been spoken of, in the Quarterly Review, as* "ringing changes on Nature for two "thousand years."

By a somewhat ludicrous coincidence, it happens that the "*arms*" *of this* "*family*" *are, literally, a* "*sun and* "*moon,*" *a* Sun, OR, *and a* Moon, ARGENT, secundùm ARTEM.

It is, therefore, with this SUN *and* MOON, *that Lord* BYRON, *I have no doubt, plays at* "BOWLS!" *Not with the* SUN *and* MOON *in* NATURE.

In return, I have only ventured to take, as an inscription to my shield, his Lordship's motto, with a trifling alteration:

He that plays at "BOWLS" (with the "SUN and MOON")
must expect "RUBBERS;"

Which is only an old "proverb," *for part of an* OLD SONG! *As for any alteration in his heraldic motto, I should not dare to say,* NE CREDE BYRON; *but, I think, in this game, I shall take from his Lordship's arms the* "SUPPORTERS;" *though I would not, if I could, touch the* GRACEFUL *and* GLITTERING CREST OF HIS HIGH POETICAL CHARACTER; *and long may he wear it uninjured!*

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When I have classed POPE, as a Poet, inferior to MILTON and SHAKESPEARE, I must beg to be understood, that I do not consider him in the same *file* with these Poets, nor in any degree to be ranked with them.

Some allowance will be made for the circumstances under which this Answer has been brought out; the instances being adduced on the spur of the occasion, under the anxiety that the considerate and impartial, before they decide, with Lord BYRON, might at least hear *alteram partem*.

It would be important for the reader to keep in mind one plain distinction, in reading what is here offered. Whatever is *picturesque* is so far *poetical*; but all that is "poetical," does not require to be "picturesque." Lord BYRON would never have said, "What painter does not break the sea with a boat," &c. if he had remembered this distinction.

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LETTER I.

MY LORD,

HORNE TOOKE, if I remember right, began his well-known letter to JUNIUS, in these words: "Tragedy, Comedy, and Farce,—JUNIUS, "WILKES, and FOOTE,—against one poor parson, "are fearful odds." So I might say, Lord BYRON, and my two late assailants,—APOLLO, MIDAS, and PUNCH,—are indeed fearful odds against a country clerk and provincial editor.

But to be more courtly, in approaching your Lordship as a controversialist upon any point, I am well aware of the great talents opposed to me. I have just read your Remarks (addressed to a friend) on my Life of POPE, on the *first part* of my Vindication in the Pamphleteer, and on my PRINCIPLES of Poetical Criticism,

which I had called *(foolishly,* in your Lordship's opinion) INVARIABLE.

I thank you, cordially, for this opportunity of explaining my sentiments, which I know you would not intentionally pervert; for the flattering terms in which you have spoken of me personally; and, most of all, for the honourable and open manner in which you have met the questions on which we are at issue.

The late contest in which I have been involved, with those of a character so opposite, has tended to make this contrast of urbanity and honourable opposition more gratifying. From you, my Lord, I was certain I should not meet coarse and insulting abuse, the foul ribaldry of opprobrious contumely, nor the petty chicanery that purposely keeps out of sight one part of an argument, and wilfully misrepresents another.

Your opposition, as might become a person of so high a station, and of such distinguished genius, exhibits none of those little arts of literary warfare. Your letter is at once argumentative, manly, good-humoured, and eloquent.

I am afraid, that if those whom I have lately encountered might have thought that "your "Lordship would decide the contest at once,"—in short, "hit the nail in the head, and BOWLES "in the head also,"—they will be somewhat disappointed.

But, be this as it may, I can say, with great truth, that if it be an honour to have such a character for an opponent, it is a duty incumbent on me to endeavour to shew myself not unworthy, my Lord, of such notice, by meeting your objections in the same spirit.

Your observations, in answer to what I said of parts of POPE's moral character, may be comprised in few words. It was far from my heart to charge him with a "libertine sort of love," on account of the errors or frailties of youth? I disdained in the Life of POPE, to make any allusion to CIBBER's well-known anecdote. It would have been fanatic or hypocritical in me to have done so. When I spoke of his "libertine kind "of love," I alluded to the general tone of his language to Lady MARY, and many of the ladies with whom he corresponded from youth to age. I suppressed, with indignation, the Imitation of HORACE, which I believe he wrote—the most obscene and daring piece of profligacy that ever issued from the press, since the days of CHARLES the Second. I deduced no trait of his character from it, though it was not written when youth and gaiety might, in some measure, have palliated the offence, but when he was forty-two years of age. But though I had no tincture, I hope, in my feelings, of hypocrisy, or fanaticism, I thought it a duty to society to touch on one prominent

feature in his character, which shews itself in his correspondence.

As to the omission of the fact of his benevolence to SAVAGE, it was inadvertence,—*culpable*, I confess; but JOHNSON, to the best of my recollection, has also passed it over: and if I have spoken of his "general benevolence," I may be pardoned, I hope, for an omission, which, at all events, was not intentional; but on which your Lordship's animadversion I own to be just.

> "Should some more sober critic come abroad,
> "If wrong, I smile; if right, I kiss the rod."

Having touched on these points, I advance to meet your Lordship on the ground of those principles of poetical criticism, by which I adventured to estimate POPE's rank and station in his art.

If I cannot prove those principles invulnerable, even when your Lordship assails them; if I cannot answer all your arguments as plainly and as distinctly as you have adduced them; the appellation "invariable" I shall instantly discard; but saying, —if I fall, it is *Æneida dextrâ*.

On the contrary, if meeting any arguments *fairly*, I turn them against you; if, without avoiding the full force of any, I rebut them satisfactorily; I shall have more reason than ever to think those principles INVARIABLE, which even Lord BYRON cannot overturn.

It is singular that in the latter part of my vindication from the charges of the Quarterly Review, I had quoted your own poetry, my Lord, to prove those very principles which your Lordship's criticism is employed to destroy.

One thing will give me satisfaction. If you, having descended into this contest, comprehend me, I shall not probably be misrepresented by others. But, as much misrepresentation on the subject has taken place, and some misconceptions, from which I think I shall shew that your Lordship is not exempt; I shall first place before your Lordship, and the public, my sentiments, as they stand recorded in the tenth volume of POPE's Works. They are these: I have often quoted them in part, but I find it, in consequence of so many misconceptions, necessary to transcribe the greater part, that my principles may be seen in connection, and under one view.

"I presume it will readily be granted, that 'all 'images drawn from what is *beautiful or sublime* in the 'works of NATURE, are MORE beautiful and sublime 'than any images drawn from ART;' and that they are therefore, *per se*, more poetical.

"In like manner, those PASSIONS of the human heart, which belong to Nature in general, are, *per se*, more adapted to the HIGHER SPECIES of Poetry, than those which are derived from *incidental* and *transient* MANNERS. A description of a Forest is more *poetical* than a description of a cultivated Garden; and the

Passions which are pourtrayed in the Epistle of an Eloisa, render such a poem more *poetical*, (whatever might be the difference of merit in point of execution,) *intrinsically* more *poetical*, than a poem founded on the characters, incidents, and modes of *artificial life*; for instance, the Rape of the Lock.

"If this be admitted, the rule by which we would estimate POPE's general poetical character would be obvious.

"Let me not, however, be considered as thinking that the *subject alone* constitutes poetical excellency. The *execution** is to be taken into consideration at the same time; for, with Lord HARVEY, we might fall asleep over the "*Creation*" of BLACKMORE, but be alive to the touches of animation and satire in BOILEAU.

The *subject*, and the *execution*, therefore, are equally to be considered;—the one respecting the *Poetry*,—the other, the *art* and *powers* of the *Poet*. The *poetical subject*, and the *art* and *talents* of the Poet, should always be kept in mind; and I imagine it is for want of observing this rule, that so much has been said, and so little understood, of the real ground of POPE's character as a Poet.

"If you say he is not one of the first Poets that England, and the polished literature of a polished æra can boast,

> Recte necne crocos floresque perambulat Atti
> Fabula si dubitem, clamant perisse pudorem
> Cuncti pene patres.

* By *execution*, I mean not only the colours of expression, but the contrast of light and shade, the masterly management, the judicious disposition, and, in short, every thing that gives, to a great subject, relief, interest, and animation.

"If you say that he stands *poetically* pre-eminent, in the highest sense, you must deny the principles of criticism, which I imagine will be acknowledged by all.

"In speaking of the *poetical subject*, and the *powers of execution*; with regard to the *first*, POPE cannot be classed among the highest orders of poets; with regard to the *second*, none ever was his *superior*. It is futile to expect to judge of *one* composition by the rules of *another*. To say that POPE, in this sense, is not a poet, is to say that a *didactic Poem* is not a *Tragedy*, and that a *Satire* is not an *Ode*. POPE must be judged according to the rank in which he stands, among those whose delineations are taken more from *manners* than from NATURE. When I say that this is his *predominant* character, I must be insensible to every thing exquisite in poetry, if I did not except, *instanter*, the Epistle of Eloisa: but this can only be considered according to its class; and if I say that it seems to me superior to any other of the kind, to which it might fairly be compared, such as the Epistles of Ovid, Propertius, Tibullus, (I will not mention Drayton, and POPE's numerous subsequent Imitations;) but when this transcendent poem is compared with those which will bear the *comparison*, I shall not be deemed as giving reluctant praise, when I declare my conviction of its being infinitely superior to every thing of the kind, ancient or modern.

"In this poem, therefore, POPE appears on the high ground of the Poet of Nature; but this certainly is not his *general* character. In the particular instance of this poem, how distinguished and superior does he stand! It is sufficient that nothing of the kind has ever been produced equal to it, for pathos, painting, and melody."

Before I proceed, it will save myself and your Lordship some trouble, if I request you to remember, in casting your eye on this portion of the estimate of POPE's poetical character, four material points.

1st. I speak not of NATURE GENERALLY, but of images SUBLIME or BEAUTIFUL in Nature; and if your Lordship had only kept this circumstance in recollection, you would have seen, that your pleasant pictures of "the Hog in the high wind," the footman's livery, the Paddington Canal, and the pigsties, the horse-pond, the slop-basin, or ANY OTHER vessel, all must *go for nothing;* for *natural* as these images might be, they are neither "*sublime* or beautiful;" and notwithstanding the pleasantry and wit with which they are associated in your Lordship's imagination,

> "It grieves me much, the clerk might say again,
> "Who WRITES SO WELL, should ever WRITE IN VAIN."

2d. You will observe, that the proposition, "Images from what is sublime or beautiful in "Nature, *per se*," *abstractedly*, are connected with what follows, viz. the "PASSIONS which belong to "Nature" in general, NOT to Man, as living at one period, but to the human heart in general, to Nature of all ages.

3dly. You will observe, that, in speaking of the subject and execution of a poem, I do not

pass over the *execution;* for otherwise, BLACKMORE would be a greater poet than POPE:—and if your Lordship had remembered this point, you would not have supposed I could ever consider FENTON, or any other tragedian of the kind, as great a poet as POPE, though FENTON wrote a successful tragedy, and POPE, satires, &c.

And, 4thly. You will observe, that, in *execution* I think no poet was ever superior to POPE; though your Lordship thinks the *execution all,* and I do *not,* for reasons which will be given.

I now beg to place before you what follows, requesting you to observe that I most freely admit POPE's unquestioned rank in the pathetic part of poetry, concerning which my concluding remark was,—"In the particular instance of this poem, "how distinguished and SUPERIOR does he stand. "It is sufficient that nothing of the kind ever "has been produced, EQUAL TO IT for PATHOS, "PAINTING, and MELODY!"

To the first part I called Mr. CAMPBELL's particular attention before; but I am certain many mistakes would be prevented, if any opposer of another's opinion would only take the trouble to do him the justice of impartially examining what those opinions are. I therefore think it necessary, before I meet Lord BYRON, to shew where his most effective strokes seem to hit the hardest, and where they are wasted, not on my theory, but

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on the *winds*. I must hope, therefore, the reader will a little farther follow me.

After the word "melody" my observations on POPE's poetical character proceed as follow:

"From this exquisite performance, which seems to stand as the boundary between the poetry derived from the great and primary feelings of Nature, and that derived from Art, to Satire, whose subject wholly concerns existing manners, the transition is easy, but the idea painful. Nevertheless, as POPE has chosen to write Satires and Epistles, they must be compared, not as WARTON has, I think, injudiciously done with pieces of genuine poetry, but only with things *of the same kind*. To say that the beginning of one of POPE's Satires is *not poetical;* to say that you cannot find in it, if the words are transposed, the "*disjecti membra poetæ*," is not criticism. The province of Satire is totally wide; its career is in *artificial life;* and therefore to say that satire is not poetry, is to say an epigram is not an elegy. POPE has written satires; that is, confined himself chiefly, as a poet, to those subjects with which, as it has been seen, he was most conversant; subjects taken from living man, from *habits* and *manners*, more than from *principles* and *passions*.

"The career, therefore, which he opened to himself was in the second order in poetry; but it was a line pursued by HORACE, JUVENAL, DRYDEN, BOILEAU; and if in that line he stand the *highest*, upon these grounds we might fairly say, with JOHNSON, 'it is 'superfluous to ask whether POPE were a poet.'

"From the poetry, which, while it deals in local manners, exhibits also, as far as the subject would admit, the most exquisite embellishments of fancy, such as the machinery* of the Rape of the Lock, we may proceed to those subjects which concern 'living man.'

"The abstract philosophical view is first presented, as in the Essay on Man. The ground of such a poem is philosophy, not poetry: the poetry is only the *colouring*, if I may say so; and to the colouring the eye is chiefly attentive. We hardly think of the philosophy, whether it be good or bad; whether it be profound or specious; whether it evince deep thinking, or exhibit only in new and pompous array the 'babble of the 'Nurse.' Scarcely any one, till a controversy was raised, thought of the doctrines; but a thousand must have been warmed by the pictures, the addresses, the sublime interspersions of description, and the nice and harmonious precision of every word, and of almost every line. Whether, as a system of philosophy, it inculcated fate or not, no one paused to inquire; but every eye read a thousand times, and every lip, perhaps, repeated,

"Lo the poor Indian!" &c.
"The Lamb thy riot," &c.
"O Happiness," &c.

and many other passages.

"All these *illustrative* and *secondary* images are painted from the source of genuine poetry; from NATURE, not from ART. They therefore, independent of powers displayed in the versification, raise the Essay on Man, considered in the abstract, into *genuine*

* In a note to this poem, the reason is given why POPE's airy spirits are *inferior* to SHAKESPEARE'S.

poetry, although the *poetical* part is subservient to the *philosophical*.

"The Moral Essays depart much farther from poetry so defined, as they exhibit particular casts and characters of man, according to different *habits* of existing society; that is, of *artificial* life.

POPE, however, apparently leaves habits and manners, and reverts to general Nature, when he talks of a passion,

> 'That like AARON'S serpent, swallows all the rest:
> 'The RULING PASSION.'

"There is no reason to suppose that POPE, of the general internal feelings of Nature, could be more ignorant, or less capable of pourtraying them by vividness of expression and colours, than others; but we must estimate what he *has done*, not what he *might have* done. Many, perhaps, may regret with me, that if he disdained,

> '..... in *Fancy*'s fields to wander long,
> 'But stoop'd to Truth, and moraliz'd his song;'

that he had not at least wandered *somewhat longer* among scenes that were congenial to the feelings of every heart; and that he should leave them for the thorns and briars of ineffectual satire and bitterness; quitting for these such scenes as

> 'The Paraclete's white walls and silver springs;'

like his great predecessor in poetry, MILTON, who left the 'Pastures of Peneus, and the Pines of Ætna,' to write 'Tetrachordon,' and to mingle in the malignant puritanical turbulence of the times.*

"When we speak of the poetical character, derived from passions of *general Nature*, two obvious distinc-

* WARTON.

tions must occur, without regard to Aristotle;—those which, derived from the passions, may be called *pathetic*, and those which, derived from the same source, may be called *sublime*.

" Of the pathetic, no one (considering the Epistle of Eloisa alone) has touched the chords so tenderly, so pathetically, and so melodiously. As far as this goes, POPE, therefore, in poetical and musical expression, has *no competitor*.

" We will now proceed to consider those passions which are equally the subject of genuine poetry, and on which are founded (I do not say Epic or Tragic excellence, for these Pope declined, but) that species of poetic sublimity, which gives life and animation to the Ode.

" In this respect, I believe, no one who ever thought of ALEXANDER's Feast, or the Bard of GRAY, could for a moment imagine POPE *pre-eminent*. Before these he sinks, as much as any other writer, whose subject was pathetic, sinks before him. His Odes for the Duke of BUCKINGHAM, though elegant, are wholly unworthy to be classed as the compositions of a superior Lyric Poet.

" In what has been said, I have avoided the introduction of picturesque description; that is, accurate representations from *external objects* of Nature: but if the premises laid down in the commencement of these reflections be true, no one can stand pre-eminent as a great descriptive poet,* although he have *an eye attentive to*, and *familiar with*, every external appearance that she may exhibit, in every change of season,

* A few passages have been corrected, which were not accurately printed before.

every variation of light and shade, every rock, every tree, every leaf, in her solitary places. He who has not an eye to observe these, and who cannot with a glance distinguish every diversity of every hue in her variety of beauties, must so far be deficient *in one of the essential qualities* of a poet.

Here POPE, from infirmities, and from physical causes, was particularly deficient. When he left his own laurel circus at Twickenham, he was lifted into his chariot or his barge; and with weak eyes, and tottering strength, it is physically impossible he could be a *descriptive* Bard. Where description has been introduced among his poems, as far as his observation could go, he excelled; more could not be expected. In the descriptions of the cloister, the scenes surrounding the melancholy convent, as far as could be gained by books, or suggested by imagination, he was eminently successful; but even here, perhaps, he only proved that he could not go far: and

> 'The streams that shine between the hills,
> 'The *grots* that echo to the tinkling rills,'

were possibly *transcripts* of what he could most easily *transcribe*, his own views and scenery.

But how different, how minute is his description, when he describes what he is master of: for instance, the game of Ombre, in the Rape of the Lock? This is from *artificial life;* and with artificial life, from his infirmities, he must have been chiefly conversant. But if he had been gifted with the same powers of observing outward Nature, I have no doubt he would have evinced as much accuracy in describing the appropriate and peculiar beauties, such as Nature exhibits in the

Forest* where he lived, as he was able to describe, in a manner so novel, and with colours so vivid, a game of cards.†

"It is for this reason that his Windsor Forest, and his Pastorals, must ever appear so defective to a lover of Nature.

"POPE, therefore, wisely left *this part* of his art, which THOMSON, and many other poets since his time, have cultivated with so much *more* success, and turned to what he calls the 'Moral' of the Song.‡

"I need not go regularly over his works; but I think they may be generally divided under the heads I have mentioned;—*Pathetic, Sublime, Descriptive,* Moral, and Satirical.

"In the pathetic, *poetically* considered, he stands highest; in the sublime, he is deficient; in descriptions from Nature, for reasons given, still more so. He therefore pursued that path in poetry, which was more congenial to his powers, and in which he has shone without a rival.

"We regret that we have little more, truly pathetic, from his pen, than the Epistle of Eloisa, the Elegy to the unfortunate Lady; and let me not forget one of the sweetest and most melodious of his pathetic effusions, the Address to Lord OXFORD:

'Such were the notes thy once-lov'd Poet sung."

"With the exception of these, and the Prologue to Cato, there are few things in POPE of the order I

* Windsor Forest.

† See Rape of the Lock, description of Ombre.

‡ 'But turn'd to truth, and moraliz'd the song.'

have mentioned, to which the recollection recurs with particular tenderness and delight.

"When he left these regions, to unite the most exquisite machinery of fancy with the descriptions of *artificial life*, the Rape of the Lock will, first and last, present itself;—a composition, as JOHNSON justly observes, the 'most elegant, the most airy,' of all his works; a composition, to which it will be in vain to compare any thing of the kind. He stands alone, unrivalled, and possibly never to be rivalled. All POPE's successful labour of correct and musical versification, all his talents of accurate description, though in an inferior province of poetry, are here consummately displayed; and as far as artificial life, that is, manners, not passions, are capable of being rendered poetical, they are here rendered so, by the fancy, the propriety, the elegance, and the poetic beauty of the Sylphic machinery.

"This 'delightful' poem, as I have said, appears to stand conspicuous and beautiful, in that medium where poetry begins to leave Nature, and *approximates* to *local manners*. The Muse has, indeed, no longer her great characteristic attributes, pathos or sublimity; but she appears so interesting, that we almost doubt whether the garb of elegant refinement is not as captivating, as the most beautiful appearances of Nature."

I have placed before the public, in one point of view, the greater part of what I advanced as the ground-work of my judgment on POPE's poetry; and I can ask whether they observe any symptoms of detraction or depreciation? I have spoken of

the sublime, the pathetic, the moral, the satirical, and the descriptive, in poetry; *putting the descriptive province last.*

Now in your letter, my Lord, you have said nothing of the SUBLIME of poetry, as distinguishing the great Poet, whose eminence in his art has led to this discussion; but I affirm, that in the pathetic, as he yields, (and the distance is great,) to SHAKESPEARE, the variety of pathos in SHAKESPEARE being considered; yet, if we view POPE's poems together, and remark his consummate EXECUTION of all he performed, though he is INFERIOR to MILTON, and must be so, from the SUPERIOR GRANDEUR of MILTON's subject, the greater exertion of talents required, "*according to the universal consent of the critics,*" and the EQUAL execution; yet in one particular branch of his art, SUBLIMITY, he yields to DRYDEN, as well as to these great poets; and in another particular branch of his art, the accurate representation of picturesque imagery from external nature, he yields to THOMSON and COWPER.

As to sublimity, you will see I have spoken of his Ode, compared with one of DRYDEN's. Will you venture to say, the Ode for Music by POPE is equal to the Ode for Music by DRYDEN, Alexander's Feast, or that ode spoken of so enthusiastically by Dr. JOHNSON? I think you will hardly do this; and if you do, I believe, my Lord, no critic in England, or Europe, will agree with you.

I must here make one observation on DRYDEN's ode on the death of Mrs. KILLEGREW. JOHNSON speaks of the first stanza as full of enthusiasm, but his criticism is very unappropriate. I will venture to point out one great cause of its sublimity. Addressing the departed spirit, the poet exclaims,

" Whether adopted to some neighbouring star,
" Thou ROLL'ST ABOVE us in thy WAND'RING race,
" Or, in procession fix'd and regular,
" MOVEST WITH THE HEAV'NS' MAJESTIC PACE."

These are the images from the sublime of nature, which give this ode its exalted character. I shall quote the first lines.

" Thou youngest virgin daughter of the skies,
" Made in the *last promotion of the blest ;*
" Whose palms, new-pluck'd from Paradise,
" In spreading branches more sublimely rise,
" Rich with immortal green above the rest :
" Whether adopted to some neighb'ring star,
" Thou roll'st above us in thy wand'ring race,
" Or, in procession fix'd and regular,
" Movest with the heav'ns' majestic pace;
" Or, call'd to more superior bliss,
" Thou tread'st with seraphims the vast abyss ;
" Whatever happy region is thy place,
" Cease thy celestial song a little space."

Now take a stanza of a quite opposite character.

" The sylvan scenes of herds and flocks,
" And fruitful plains, and barren rocks;
" Of shallow brooks that flow'd so clear
" The bottom did the top appear ;
" Of deeper, too, and ampler floods,
" Which as in mirrors shew'd the woods ;
" Of lofty trees, with sacred shades,
" And perspectives of pleasant glades,

" Where nymphs of brightest form appear,
" And shaggy satyrs standing near,
" Which them at once admire and fear.
" The ruins too of some majestic place,
" Boasting the pow'r of ancient Rome or Greece,
" Whose statues, friezes, columns, broken lie,
" And, though defac'd, the wonder of the eye;
" What NATURE, ART, bold fiction ere durst frame,
" Her forming hand gave feature to the name."

The commencement is lofty and majestic, and the *execution* goes on *pari passu* with the subject; and the subject is from the most glorious objects of contemplation in Nature. In the other stanza quoted, observe that the lady's art in painting as well as poetry is set before us, and this is done by making the subject of her pictures appear as in the living landscapes of NATURE:

" The shallow brooks that flow'd so clear, &c.
" Of deeper, too, and ampler floods.
" Which *as in mirrors shew'd the woods*;
" *The perspectives of pleasant glades*,
" Where nymphs of brightest form appear,
" And shaggy satyrs, &c."

Then the picturesque ruins are presented.

" The ruins too of *some majestic place*,
" Boasting the pow'r of *ancient Rome or Greece*,
" Whose *statues, friezes, columns, broken lie*, &c."

Dr. JOHNSON says, " the other stanzas are very " inferior,—inferior indeed:" and why are these superior? for this reason, because the highest views of human contemplation are opened in the first stanza, picturesque beauty in the last, and both according to NATURE.

The conclusion of this ode is in the high strain of the beginning; and yet, as objects of artificial life are less poetical than passions which belong to general nature, the mind hardly admits the idea of "the last promotion," in the first stanza, or the word "*assizes*," relating to the great day of judgment, in the last; because with the expression "assizes" are associated the ideas of *artificial* life, the "judge's coach," and the javelin men.

I will now only request your Lordship to keep in mind what has been laid down: that art is poetical, but nature, in her sublime or beautiful features, with all their kindred associations, *more* so; that art, in its combined appearances, is most poetical, when connected *with associations or views of* NATURE, and always, and under all circumstances, POETICAL, (unless the image be vulgar,) when ASSOCIATED with EMOTIONS and PASSIONS of the HUMAN HEART.

These are my premises: and having laid them down such as they cannot but be inferred from my original observations, unless garbled, I come to meet your Lordship on the fair ground of controversy.

On the subject of POPE's poetical character WE agree. You say he is inferior to MILTON and SHAKESPEARE. This is all I asked. But the subject of our present discussion is, I think, at all events interesting. I have received much pleasure

from your Lordship's letter; and though I well know your great powers, I feel, after a more vulgar contest, as "breathing a freer air."

The first question is, "whether images from what "is sublime or beautiful in art or nature," be, *per se*, the most poetical.

Upon this first point we join issue, and stand opposed. You have taken this first axiom, which I thought, if well considered, would not be contended, and have, without periphrasis, promptly and powerfully opposed it. But remark, this is only the first part of a general proposition, as will be seen by referring to what I have said. The other part will be, perhaps, more clearly explained, as we proceed. But first of the first.

LAUNCH OF THE BEAUTIFUL SHIP, CAMPBELL.

IT must here be observed, that in answer to the first part of my proposition, Mr. CAMPBELL instanced the launch of a ship, as a WORK OF ART, beautifully poetical. My answer, *taking his own description*, was, that the ship so beautifully described by him was *more* indebted to nature than art. It was indebted to nature for the *winds*, that filled the sails; for the sunshine, that touched them with light; for the waves, on which it so triumphantly rode; for the associated ideas of the distant regions of the earth it was to visit, the tempests it was to encounter, and for being, as it were, endued with existence, "a thing of life."*

* An attempt has lately been made to rob your Lordship of much of your originality as a poet. I have seen some extracts from a publication of this kind. Some of the examples are like the description of Monmouth. "Why is Macedon like "Monmouth? because there is a river in Monmouth, and a "river in Macedon." I thought of devoting a few hours in shewing the unfairness of some of these instances; but I know you would say, "What! BOWLES. defending me! non "defensoribus istis!" The beautiful image of the "ship," in the Corsair,

"That seems to walk the waves—a thing of life!"

I think what was said was an answer to Mr. CAMPBELL, and I think so still. What other arguments he might advance I know not. His ship, as described by himself, in my opinion totally failed; and I believe Mr. CAMPBELL saw, upon reflection, that his new-launched ship, and even if it had *braved*, for a *thousand years*,

"The BATTLE and the BREEZE,"

must have surrendered.

which would not be necessary for your Lordship to add, unless an image from nature was *more* beautiful than any you brought in the description of a ship from art: this "living "ship, however, has been traced to WILSON," who has also a "living ship of loveliness." I forget the words; but if the image is to be taken from your Lordship *vi et armis*, I may as well make my demand: for in the poem, which, together with its unfortunate writer, formed part of your Satire, is the following description of "a ship" on her way:

"The tall ship,
"That, like a stately swan, in conscious pride,
"Breaks beautiful the rising surge, and throws
"The gather'd waves back, and seems to move
"A LIVING THING, upon its lucid way,
"Streaming in lovely glory to the morn."

The idea is the same: I objected to the words "lovely glory;" but somebody persuaded me to let them stay. But I do not believe that either your Lordship, or Mr. WILSON, borrowed from me; albeit, though, so to be told, your Lordship might smile.

I believe no mind, inclined to poetry, ever saw a ship in full sail, but has felt the propriety of the image.

I take this opportunity of thanking your Lordship for remembering the little anecdote, which I mentioned merely for the sake of shewing the disadvantage of implicitly relying on the Reviews. Your recollection is better than mine. But the mode in which the circumstance had been commented on, was *gratuitously ill-natured*, for it had nothing to do with the criticism.

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Mr. CAMPBELL declined, at least, further contest; whether because he would not, or because he thought he *could* not, is of no consequence. Your Lordship implies that he would not; I am bold to say he could not; and I am bolder to say, I think even your Lordship cannot.

Under its new, and gallant, and dauntless, and experienced, and NOBLE Captain, the battle is now to be fought again. And though years have made some impression, and different tracks of study have taken me far away from the scene of such discussions, and even desuetude from such contest be something, and disinclination more; yet, my Lord,

"Maugre your youth, strength, fortune, eminence,"

not unconscious of your powers, but more conscious of the soundness of my cause, I venture to meet you.

Before I examine your arguments, my first object will be to do them *perfect justice*, to place them in their full force, and not only to do so, but, if I doubt the meaning, to give the *substance* in my own language, that it may be seen whether I perfectly understand them or not.

This, I think, due to every one, whose sentiments I might be called upon to oppose, more especially due to a person like your Lordship; and if such fairness, or any thing like such *fairness*, had been used towards me, I should not have been assailed

by so many flippant fallacies, so many gross and palpable perversions.

The substance of your arguments, detached from the *jokes*, I conceive to be as follows.

The ship gives as much *beauty* to the *waters* as it receives from them. If the SUN were taken away, what then? The ship, if I understand your Lordship, would not be seen. If Mr. BOWLES's pamphlet was not read by the light of the sun, it must be read by candle-light!! Allow me to substitute for Mr. BOWLES's pamphlet Lord BYRON's poems. No *beauty* is added to *them* by the sun; for whether they are read by sun-light or candle-light, they are equally beautiful. I have read them by both: But the sun adds beauty to a ship; therefore this argument, which I think must be written by candle-light, does *not hold;* for it is as clear as "the SUN AT NOON-DAY," that "the sun" neither gives nor takes from the beauty of Lord BYRON's poems, let them be read where they will; but it does give beauty, essential beauty, to the ship.

2d. Thousands of people went to see the launch of the ship, who would not look upon the sea, particularly as it was *calm*, and *calm* water might be seen in the London Dock, Paddington Canal, a horse-pond, a slop-basin, or in any *other* vessel!

3d. The wind that filled the sails of the ship, might be heard through the chinks of a PIGSTY; and the sun might shine on a BRASS WARMING-PAN!

This, I conceive, my Lord, is the substance of your argument; which, if it had come from any one but yourself, I should have thought scarcely worth answering: as an argument, the bare statement almost confutes it. The least *fair discussion* will shatter it to rags, reduce it to the *blue bunting* of which the streamer of the ship is composed, and I had almost said, make it fit to be consigned to that "*other* vessel," whatever it be, which has so *facetiously* entered your Lordship's high poetical *imagination*. Allow me first to shew you what you have *not* done, before I examine what you have done, by way of argument.

You have not answered, nor attempted to answer, all the arguments which have been already brought forward on this occasion.

Mr. Campbell, in his description of the ship, spoke not only of the effect of the sun, the seas, and the wind, but added other ideas; its visiting the remote parts of the earth, the tempests it might encounter, and described it, in his poetical vision, "a thing of life." I said, "the ideas of its visiting distant regions were ideas from nature, "which conspire to make this sight *more* interest-"ing to the poet's thoughts, and therefore more "poetical."

These you have not touched; and I am sure, if you had, and could bring no arguments but from Paddington Canal, &c. my "fortress" would not

have much to fear from your Lordship's somewhat grotesque battery. Whatever motive Mr. CAMPBELL had for not defending his own Seventy-four, I think your Lordship, in argument at least, has not succeeded, however delightful your publication may be in other respects.

And now, my Lord, to point *our* guns, to open our fire, and endeavour to blow your PIG-STIES, "BRASS WARMING-PANS, and THAT OTHER VES-"SEL," into shatters.

But, let me be fair; let the reader compare what you advance with the substance I have given.

"Mr. BOWLES asserts, that CAMPBELL's "Ship of the line" derives all its poetry not from "*art*," but from "*nature*." "Take away the waves, the winds, the sun, &c. &c. *one* will become a stripe of blue bunting; and the other a piece of coarse canvas on three tall poles." Very true; take away the "waves," the winds," and there will be no ship at all, not only for poetical, but for any other purpose; and take away "the sun," and we must read Mr. BOWLES's pamphlet by candle-light. But the "poetry" of the "Ship" does *not* depend on "the waves," &c.; on the contrary, the "Ship of the "Line" confers its own poetry upon the waters, and heightens *theirs*. I do not deny that the "waves and "winds," and above all "the sun," are highly poetical; we know it to our cost, by the many descriptions of them in verse: but if the waves bore only the foam upon their bosoms, if the winds wafted only the sea-weed to the shore, if the sun shone neither upon pyramids, nor

fleets, nor fortresses, would its beams be equally poetical? I think not: the poetry is at least reciprocal. Take away "the Ship of the Line" "swinging round" the "calm water," and the calm water becomes a somewhat monotonous thing to look at, particularly if not transparently *clear;* witness the thousands who pass by without looking on it all. What was it attracted the thousands to the launch? they might have seen the poetical "calm water" at Wapping, or in the "London Dock," or in the Paddington Canal, or in a horse-pond, or in a slop-basin, or in any other vase. They might have heard the poetical winds howling through the chinks of a pigsty, or the garret window; they might have seen the sun shining on a footman's livery, or on a brass warming-pan; but could the calm water," or the "wind," or the "sun," make all, or any of these "poetical?" I think not. Mr. BOWLES admits "the Ship" to be poetical, but only from those accessaries: now if they *confer* poetry so as to make one thing poetical, they would make other things poetical; the more so, as Mr. BOWLES calls a "ship of the line" without them, that is to say, its "masts and sails and streamers," "blue bunting," and "coarse canvas," and "tall poles." So they are; and porcelain is clay, and man is dust, and flesh is grass, and yet the two latter at least are the subjects of much poesy."

The commencement, my Lord, is ominous. Mr. BOWLES never said, nor is it consistent with the principles he has adopted to say, Mr. CAMPBELL'S ship *derives* ALL its poetry from nature. If this misstatement, *in principio,* was inten-

tional, I need not have appealed to you for my character of candour.

Mr. BOWLES said, and says, "that poetical beauty in a ship "*depends* not on art but nature." ALL its poetry, he instantly admits, it does not derive from nature; but its poetical beauty *depends* upon nature; for the sails would not swell, the streamers would not flow, the motion would cease—its LIFE, which Mr. CAMPBELL speaks of, would be extinct.

But you say the poetry of the ship does not *depend* on the waves, &c. I think it does, for this reason,—that all this beauty, motion, and life, would be at once lost and extinct. True, nor can I for a moment think otherwise; thus seen, and thus associated, "the ship confers its own poetry upon the "waters, and heightens theirs," but NOT BEFORE the *elements of nature* have ENABLED IT TO DO SO; and, therefore, its primary poetical beauty *depends* on nature, not art.

You say, take away the WINDS and waves, and there will be NO SHIP at all! Then its *very existence depends* on them! And "take away the sun, "and you must read Mr. BOWLES's pamphlet by "candle-light." Read it how or when you will, the sun will be more poetical than a candle; and the seas, that "speak in the EAST and the WEST "AT ONCE," will not depend on the ship for poetical sublimity, (but the ship will on them,) any more than the sun will *depend* upon Lord BYRON's

poetry. And then I ask you, my Lord, this question, (begging you to remember my principles only require that the works of nature, which are beautiful and sublime, are *more* poetical, *abstractedly*, than any works of art,)—whether the sun, the waves, and winds are, *per se*, more poetical without the ship, or the ship, *per se*, without the waves, &c. &c.? The poetry, therefore, is not reciprocal; for the ship can give no beauty till the elements of nature, on which its beauty depends, enable it to do so. Then it gives and receives. But, my Lord, you must remember, that when I answered Mr. CAMPBELL, (and I do not think either he or your Lordship can make my good ship surrender,) he made no distinction at all, but coloured his rich descriptions with all the hues of nature, and then advanced to shew the poetical beauties of ART.

But the water is *calm*, and its monotony requires to be broken; and this "*calmness*," which is one feature of this mighty element, may be contemplated at Wapping, in the London Dock, Paddington Canal, a horse-pond, or any other vessel!

No: for though the water at Wapping, the London Dock, in the Paddington Canal, a HORSE-POND, or any OTHER vessel, be *calm*, it is *not poetical*. But your argument is this. "The sea is calm; the "water in a horse-pond, or any other vessel, "is calm; therefore the calm water in a horse-"pond is as poetical as the sea!" No, my Lord:

for the sea cannot be made unpoetical, and your great powers cannot make the water in a *horse-pond*, or ANY OTHER VESSEL, poetical: and I will conclude with COWPER's description of the calm sea, whom, however, you call NO POET, and whom I think an original, pathetic, and great poet.

> " OCEAN exhibits, fathomless and broad,
> " Much of the *power* and *majesty of God!*
> " He swathes about the swelling of the deep,
> " That shines and rests, as infants smile and sleep.
> " Vast as it is, it answers, as it flows,
> " The breathings of the lightest air that blows.
> " Curling and whitening over all the waste,
> " The rising waves obey the increasing blast."

But we must stop before the storm comes on, for I wish only to shew how this " *monotonous*" object can, in its calmest state, and without a single ship, or any accompaniments, be rendered *poetical.*

In fact, it does not seem to me, that your Lordship makes distinction between the SEA in painting, and the SEA in poetry.

" The sun is poetical," by your Lordship's admission; and to *our cost*, you say, by the many descriptions in verse. To which sentence I do not accede, as we possibly might have lost some of your own most beautiful descriptions. But to follow your argument.

" If the waves bore only foam upon their bosoms;
" if the winds wafted only sea-weed to the shore;
" if the sun shone neither upon pyramids, nor

"fleets, nor fortresses, would its beams be *equally* "poetical?" Answer:—

The sun would be equally poetical, let it shine on what it may. If the waves bore only foam upon their bosoms, the ocean would be equally sublime, far from every track of vessel, every intrusion of man.

The ocean, I affirm, wants not the accessaries of any thing *human* to make it SUBLIME, and therefore poetical. It is poetical, though not equally *picturesque* or beautiful, with or without them. The ideas it excites of Almighty power are those of *sublimity*, the highest poetical sublimity, which proudly rejects any associations or accessaries of human art, or of human kind, to make it more so. "*The deep uttereth his voice*," is one of the most sublime of the many sublime passages relating to it in the scriptures. We have no occasion to make it *more* poetical to say, "there go the "ships;" but the ship, moving beautiful to the sight, and almost seeming, as it were, a creature of the vast element, and made doubly interesting, as an object of beauty, by those accessaries of nature, without which it is nothing; a ship so seen adds to the *picture of poetical* beauty, but *not* to the more awful ideas of SUBLIMITY, which are far *more poetical*. In sunshine, in calm, in tempest, by night, by day, in its *deepest solitudes*, it wants nothing of art to make it *sub-*

lime, as speaking every where, "in the east and "in the west," in the north and the south, with one everlasting voice, 'Infinitude and Power.' What can be more sublime than this verse of the Psalmist? "If I take the wing of the morn-"ing, and dwell in the UTTERMOST PARTS OF "THE SEA, even there shall thy hand lead me."

The studies of my profession have carried me to the consideration of all the ancient heresies. The Valentinian Creed proclaims, "In the be-"ginning was DEPTH, and SILENCE!"* Endless space, and eternal silence! and these ideas alone are SUBLIME. How directly and gloriously opposed to this idea is the opening of the gospel of St. John. "IN THE BEGINNING was "THE WORD, and the WORD was with GOD, "and the WORD was GOD." And sublime as the former ideas may be, because they are connected with *terror*, the passage from St. John is far more striking; seeming like an echo to the words, "And GOD said, Let there be LIGHT: and "there WAS LIGHT!"—a GOD, and a Creator, and a Saviour, REVEALED.

I hope, as your Lordship, in your pamphlet, professes so great a regard for ETHICS, and ethic poetry, in which I most cordially agree, this observation will be excused.

* These ideas in the VALENTINIAN Creed were personified.

To return: "if the waves bore only foam upon "their bosoms;"—"if the winds wafted only sea-"weed to the shore;"—"if the sun had neither "pyramids, nor fleets, nor fortresses, to shine "upon;" if it shone upon none of the emmets of earth, man, or his little works; it would be equally a stupendous object, in the visible creation, *per se*, abstractedly, and equally SUBLIME; and it would be poetical, equally poetical, whether it shone on pyramids or *posts*, fortresses or "pig-"sties," a "brass warming-pan, or a footman's "livery," though neither pigsties, or posts, *could be* sublime or beautiful, with or without it.

Pyramids, I repeat, are *most poetical* from associations; and fortresses also: but brass warming-pans are images of *in-door* nature, and footmen's liveries are images of "*artificial*" life; and to say, that, because the sun can make one object poetical, it must necessarily make ANOTHER so, is not an argument worthy of Lord BYRON; and I am afraid we must say of the "sun" shining upon your "warming-pan" and "footman's livery," as of the "hog in a high wind,"

> "It grieves me much, replied the Clerk again,
> "Who speaks so well, should ever speak in vain."

But how much genuine poetry is condensed in one line, where a ship is spoken of,

"SAILING IN SUNSHINE, FAR AWAY!"

As for the sun on Mr. CAMPBELL's ship, if the ship did not want the sun, to give it more poetical interest, why did Mr. CAMPBELL think it necessary to introduce the sun at all? "But the ship "*gives*, as well as it *receives*:" so seen, it gives beauty, animating beauty, to the *seas*, not to the sun. It gives back, indeed, and amply repays what it receives; but does a brass warming-pan give back any poetical beauty?

"The sun shines white upon the rocks!"
The sun shines white upon the warming-pan:

and so the sun shines on Dr. SYNTAX's wig; but try the effect,

"Pale on the lone tower falls the evening beam."
Pale on my grey wig falls the evening beam.

Therefore Mr. CAMPBELL introduced the sun needlessly, if it did not make the ship more poetical; but though the ship (being itself especially so adorned, as if it came and went NATURE's chief favourite and delight among the works of art) gives, as well as it receives, beauty; a footman's livery does not do so, my Lord, any more than an old wig, upon which the sun equally shines, as on the Hellespont, or the crest of Hector.

As to seas without a ship, or with a ship upon the STOCKS, I appeal to our friend CRABBE. He is my neighbour; and though we scarce ever talk of criticism, in his absence I may venture to quote

a little from a poem of his, as the description bears on the point; and your Lordship does not, I believe, reckon him among those whom you are pleased to call "naturals." He describes the sea in such a manner as I think might rival the greatest poet that ever lived. He shall give us the sea *without a ship;* and what is more to the purpose, a ship ON THE STOCKS!

"The sea without a ship."

"With ceaseless motion comes and goes the tide,
"FLOWING it fills the channel VAST and WIDE;
"Then back to sea with strong majestic sweep
"IT ROLLS, in ebb, yet terrible and deep!"

I need not point out to your Lordship the effect of the metre, and the imagery:

"Then BACK to SEA with strong majestic sweep
"IT ROLLS."

Next we have a little of ART.

"Here samphire banks, and salt-wort bound the flood,
"Here STAKES," &c.

I will leave CRABBE a moment; and as your Lordship seems to think, (mistaking, it appears to me, the *poetical* for the *picturesque*,) that the sea is *more poetical* (more picturesque it certainly is) *with ships* than without them, I will take an exquisite picture, which you may possibly recognise.

"He that has sail'd upon the dark blue sea,
"Has view'd at times, I ween, a full fair sight;

" When the fresh breeze is fair as breeze may be,
" The white sail set, the gallant frigate tight;
" Masts, spires, and strand retiring to the right,
" The glorious main expanding o'er the bow,
" The convoy spread like wild swans in their flight,
" The dullest sailer wearing bravely now,
" So gaily curl the waves before each dashing prow."

Childe Harold.

I fear your Lordship *with your ships* will have it *hollow;* but before I go back to CRABBE, to have fair play, I would take another picture from DYER; which, except your Lordship's, is the finest description in the world. " Now" &c.

" Glide the tall fleet into the widening main,
" A floating forest: ev'ry sail unfurl'd,
" Swells to the wind—&c.

....

" Meantime in pleasing course the pilot steers,
" STEADY, with eye intent upon the steel,
" STEADY before the winds the pilot steers,
" While gaily o'er the waves the mountain prows
" Dance, like a SHOAL of DOLPHINS, and begin
" To streak with various paths the hoary deep.
" Yet steady o'er the waves they steer, and now
" The fluctuating WORLD of WATERS WIDE,
" In BOUNDLESS MAGNITUDE, around them swell,
" O'er whose imaginary brim, nor TOWNS,
" Nor WOODS, nor mountain tops, nor ought appears,
" But *Phœbus* orb, *refulgent lamp* of light,
" MILLIONS OF LEAGUES ALOFT."

Hang " Phœbus" and refulgent " *lamp!*" But do you not think the latter part of this description *most* poetical, with the boundless seas, and the sun's sole orb, as it would be, if accompanied with the gondolas of Venice, or if the ships were entirely omitted, though not so BEAUTIFULLY picturesque?

The ships, however, are still careering in the breeze and sunshine, therefore we will return for a moment to CRABBE, to shew some of the infinitude of this said SEA's poetical beauties without ships.

" Turn to the watery world!—but who to thee
" (A wonder yet unview'd) shall paint *the Sea!*
" *Various and vast, sublime in all its forms,*
" When *lull'd* by zephyrs, or when *rous'd by storms,*
" Its *colours* changing, when from *clouds* and *sun,*
" *Shades after shades* upon *the surface run*;
" Embrown'd and horrid now, and now serene,
" In limpid blue, and evanescent green;
" And oft the foggy banks on ocean lie,
" Lift the far sail, and cheat the experienc'd eye.
" Then the broad bosom of the ocean keeps
" An equal motion, swelling as it sleeps;
" Then slowly sinking, curling to the strand,
" Faint, lazy waves o'ercreep the ridgy sand,
" Or tap the tarry boat with gentle blow,
" And back return in silence, smooth and slow.
" Ships in the calm seem anchor'd, for they glide
" On the still sea, urg'd solely by the tide:
" Art thou not present, this calm scene before,
" Where all beside is pebbly length of shore,
" And far as eye can reach, it can discern no more."

This, to be sure, is not entirely an ocean view, without boats or ships; but how exquisitely, how beautifully, is every thing touched! Can you make Paddington Canal as beautiful or sublime?

Now then for a vessel on the stocks.

" Near these a crew amphibious in the docks
" Rear, for the sea, those castles on the stocks:
" See! the long keel, which soon the waves must hide
" See! the strong ribs which form the roomy side,

" Bolts yielding slowly to the sturdiest stroke,
" And planks which curve and crackle in the smoke;
" Around the whole rise cloudy wreaths, and far
" Bear the warm pungence of o'er-boiling tar."

Paint your ship on the stocks how you will, which of these pictures is most sublime or beautiful?

In fact, there is not a sight so awful, so sublime, or so terrible, as the ocean. And, therefore, in its infinite shades and appearances, it exhibits in all, indeed,

" MUCH OF THE POWER and majesty of GOD."

It is by itself more poetical, far more poetical, than a ship with it or without it,—which is my proposition.

And now, my Lord, one word or two about " THE WIND." " The thousands that came to see " the ship launched, the sails streaming in the wind, " might have heard the wind through the *chinks* of " a *pigsty!*" HUDIBRAS observes,

" As pigs are said to SEE the WIND."

Did this thought occur, when your Lordship associated the " wind" and the " pigsty" so ingeniously and sublimely? True; the thousands who were attracted to see " the launch" might have heard the " winds through a pigsty;" and they certainly did not go to *hear* the *wind*, or to see the sea, which, as you justly observe, " thousands pass, " without looking on it at all." Is it less sublime for that? Of all the thousands who saw the beautiful

sight of this ship-launch, who among them saw it with the eye, and heart, and feelings of Mr. CAMPBELL? He has painted it, and in painting it, shewn the eye and heart of a poet; but the thousands who went to see the sight, would probably have gone to see KATTERFELTO perform some of his wonders,

"Wond'ring for his bread,"

as readily as to the launch of this ship, so far as *poetical* interest excited them. But whether they came or staid at home, whether the ship was launched or not, the sun was not less sublime, though *beauty* was added to the waves.

As to the *winds*, independent of their effect on the sails of a ship, they are poetical or not, as their sound is associated in the poet's fancy. When poor TOM sings,

"Hark! through the hawthorn blows the cold wind;"

Let us try the effect of a different association, according to your Lordship's ideas, and for the hawthorn add an image from "artificial life."

"Hark! through the "pigsty" blows the cold wind."

Is the wind equally poetical? In fact, my proposition is proved, if I may say so, to the right and the left; and before some little "logic," your "pigsty," your "garret window," your "footman's "livery," your "brass warming-pan," are all blown away to *the winds*.

Much as I admire, my Lord, your talents, I think you must have produced such arguments without reflection; if you meant ME, in any part of that quotation, wherein you pleasantly apply the words,

> " Quoth he, there was a SHIP;
> " Now let me go, thou GREY-HAIRED LOON,
> " Or MY STAFF shall make thee SKIP:"

I answer, though my " hairs, alas! are grey," your staff has not made me SKIP AN INCH. What, if I should almost begin to think, I might make even him who swam over the Hellespont " skip!" But I fear, if I may be thought to have the least advantage, it is because your Lordship has not looked at the question on *all sides;* or remembered the plain words of my proposition; otherwise you would not have amused your admirers at my expense with such a hodge-podge of suns, winds, seas, Wapping, London Docks, Paddington Canals, pigsties, garret windows, horse-ponds, slop-basins, and OTHER VESSELS, "footmen's livery," and "brass " warming-pans."

But it is time to leave the coast of England, fruitful in such homely images, and accompany your Lordship to the

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COAST OF ATTICA—TEMPLE OF THESEUS, &c.

" The beautiful but barren HYMETTUS, the " whole coast of Attica, her HILLS, and mountains, " Pentelicus, Anchesmus, Philopappus, &c. are in " themselves poetical, and would be so, if the name " of Athens, of Athenians, and HER VERY RUINS, " were swept from the earth."—*Lord Byron.*

" But am I to be told, (you proceed) that the " nature" of Attica would be *more* poetical without the ART of the Acropolis? of the Temple of Theseus? of the still all great and glorious monuments of exquisitely artificial skill? Ask the traveller which strikes him most as *poetical,* the Parthenon, or the hill on which it stands? The columns of Lake Colonna, or the lake itself; the rocks at the foot of it, or the recollection that Falconer's *ship* was bulged upon them? There are a thousand rocks and capes more picturesque than those of the Acropolis and Cape Sunium in themselves; what are they to a thousand scenes in the wilder parts of Greece, of Asia Minor, Switzerland, or even Cintra in Portugal, or to many scenes of Italy, and the Sierras of Spain?

"But it is the *art*, the columns, the temples, the *wrecked* vessel, which give them their antique and their modern poetry, and not the spots themselves; without them, the *spots* of *earth* would be unnoticed and unknown; buried, like Babylon and Nineveh, in indistinct confusion, without poetry, as without existence; but to whatever spot of earth these ruins were transported, if they were capable of transportation, like the Obelisk, and the Sphinx, and the Memnon's Head, there they would still exist in the perfection of their beauty, and in the pride of their poetry."

I here set before the reader the whole of this passage, because it is itself so beautiful. It is worthy Lord BYRON, and is as forcible as it is eloquent, and picturesque as it is argumentative. I need not enter into an analysis to shew that I understand it, for I understand it in its full force; and though I have not seen these places but in Lord BYRON's interesting pictures, and even in this splendid assemblage I hope I am not so insensible, (such a "natural,") as not to feel how poetical and affecting are those scattered columns, those temples, in those spots, where, *nescio quomodo movemur*, &c.; I can at least say, though I have not seen them, *animum pictura pascit inani.* I might add, *non obtusa adeo gestamus pectora;* and what I feel cannot better be described than in the vivid painting of kindred scenes by a poet whom I have quoted.

" Behold the pride of pomp,
" The throne of nations fall'n; obscur'd in dust,
" E'en yet majestical: the solemn scene
" ELATES THE SOUL, while now the RISING SUN
" Flames on the ruins, in the purer AIR,
" Tow'ring aloft, upon the glitt'ring plain,
" Like broken rocks, a vast circumference,
" Rent PALACES, crush'd COLUMNS, rifled moles,
" Fanes roll'd on fanes, and tombs on buried tombs.
" Deep lies in dust the Theban Obelisk
" Immense along the waste; *minuter art*,
" Gleconian forms, or Phidian, subtly fair
" O'erwhelming; as the immense Leviathan,
" Outstretch'd, unwieldy, his island length uprears
" Above the foamy flood .....
" Grey mould'ring temples swell, and wide o'ercast
" The solitary landscape, hills, and woods,
" And boundless wilds, &c."

Dyer's Ruins of Rome.

With such feelings, and affected by such images so distinctly and beautifully set before us, where nature and art contend in what is most striking and affecting in the imagery of either, I read your animated description. I concede, instanter, that the " nature" of Attica would not be *more poetical* without the " art" of the Acropolis, or the Temple of Theseus, or the still great and glorious monuments of her exquisitely artificial genius. I concede this; but I deny, that, *abstractedly*, as works of art, these works are as sublime, or, therefore, as *poetical*, as the sublimest images from nature. Of the rocks on which they stand, I know nothing: in sublimity or beauty they may

bear as little comparison as a piece of Pentelican marble such as it is in nature, and Pentelican marble formed into an august temple or statue. No one can deny this: but if you take the *highest works* of art, with all their poetical associations, and compare them with the "spots" of earth, where Babylon and Nineveh are buried; the spots as spots, and the ruins as ruins, cannot be compared; but compare the most sublime of the objects of art, either abstractedly, that is, without any poetical associations, or with associations, and I deny the major part of your arguments *in toto*; or that the sublimest works of art, be they where or what they may, are *more* sublime than the most sublime of the works of nature. And I again affirm, that what is sublime or beautiful, *per se*, in the works of nature, *comparatis comparandis*, is *more* sublime or beautiful than any works of art, and also in their associations, one leading the thought to God, and the other to man: and I answer, if you adduce the Temple of Theseus, give me the *Temple of the Universe, not made with hands*, and your temple will be as insignificant as the dust of the marble that composes it.

But, without going so far at present, I will ask your Lordship (and no one is a better judge), whom you think the most sublime of all poets, living or dead, —the most sublime, without exception? Whom would Pope call so? One of those mighty spirits,

which has given these poetical scenes, with their temples and columns, half their poetical interest. Shall I say HOMER? will you admit this?

Then I ask, if so, how comes it to pass, that the greatest poet the world has produced, wrote before the existence of any ARTS, at least in such perfection? Of rapidity and greatness of events, variety of character, wonderful invention, command of passions, and affecting incidents, we are not here speaking. And I must beg you, my Lord, to remember this, lest I might be told, that I assert that descriptions of external Nature are those which give the chief sublimity to the poems of HOMER.

Further, I say that all the illustrious images you have called up from the august remains of ancient art, are connected with *poetical passions;* and these passions are the emotions of *Nature*, from a thousand affecting connections: and I say, putting passions out of the question, that, in description of external Nature, and of the gods themselves, without being indebted to any temples, or statues of them, HOMER stands, with the exception of MILTON, the sole and mightiest master of his art (of which external nature makes a great part) in the world. Let the temples of art, and the statues of gods, be as beautiful or sublime as they may, how came HOMER, in his descriptions, (not of what is *natural*, his Jack-Ass and Boar similies,) but in the most

beautiful and sublime objects in Nature,—the θηνα πολυφλοισβοιο θαλασσης—the beautiful piece by moon-light,—the sublimity of Jupiter or Neptune,—to be the most poetical painter in the world? especially of the god whose statue has given immortality to the name of PHIDIAS? I need not inform your Lordship, that the Jupiter of HOMER was the original of the Jupiter of PHIDIAS.

Did HOMER, then, exceed every poet in every part of his art? "I think so." Then, if it was before the appearance of such images of art, as your Lordship has so described, "images taken from "what is sublime or beautiful in Nature must have "been *more poetical, per se*, than any images de- "rived from art." To proceed:—

What are all the gods of HOMER,* in the description of whom he has so wonderfully excelled, from the Supreme Deity to the Lord of the Ocean, and to the inferior deities of the sea or skies? what are these but personifications of some of the elements of nature? But we may have more to say of this hereafter. To follow the argument.

Secondly, I would observe "of your richest as- "semblage of works of art," as *more poetical* than the *spots* where they are, this may be true. But let us leave these "*spots*," as they are called. Let us

* The Arms, &c. will be considered, when we speak of the spear of Achilles.

leave Greece, or even the wild Sierras of Spain, and pass to America. Mark the vast Mississippi or Missouri, pouring their ocean-like waters, from interior sources, through regions "dark with shades "of eternal forests!" Hear the astounding fall, and torrent roar of the stupendous Niagara! Call up your PHIDIAS, let him form a god there! Call up him who placed Memnon's Head in the desert, and left his name unknown for ever! Call up the builders of those temples and columns, the description of which gives your pictures such interest; will their works add to the magnificence of Nature, or make it *more* poetical, where the character of the scenery is already on the highest scale of magnificence? "*Manifestations of mind!*" What are the manifestations of the human mind in St. Peter's, the Coliseum, the Pantheon, in the Venus, to the manifestations of the power and the majesty of the Godhead in all his works?

3dly. The "*ruins,*" you say, are as *poetical* in Piccadilly, as they are in the Parthenon. "Its rocks "are *less so* without them." Of that I have no doubt; but the rock is not the sublimest of rocks, though the ruins are the sublimest remains of the works of art; and this is scarcely, as I have said, a fair way of stating the comparison: add, that the ruins themselves are more poetical from associations, than from their intrinsic sublimity; they indeed stand "alone in the world," as ROGERS, speaking of

the "Torso," has finely said. Besides, are not these ruins, independent of their being the highest specimens of human art, connected with a thousand associations, and all connected with the feelings of Nature. I must have the most sublime and beautiful of objects to meet them in the visible creation; and if these will not do, (but I think the sun and the seas quite sufficient,) I might rise, as I have remarked,

"From NATURE, up to NATURE'S GOD!"

to the far more sublime, and therefore *more poetical*, ideas of ALMIGHTY power, and the IMMENSITY of HIS WORKS, who "walketh upon the "wings of the wind.."

"THESE ARE THY GLORIOUS WORKS, PARENT OF GOOD,
"ALMIGHTY, THINE THIS UNIVERSAL FRAME,
"THUS WOND'ROUS FAIR; THYSELF HOW WONDROUS THEN!
"UNSPEAKABLE, WHO SITST ABOVE THESE HEAV'NS
"TO US INVISIBLE, OR DIMLY SEEN
"IN THESE THY LOWEST WORKS; YET THESE DECLARE
"THY GOODNESS BEYOND THOUGHT, AND POWER DIVINE."

MILTON.

VENICE, &c.

I Have followed you, with delight, my Lord, over the course you have taken since we left the pigsties; but I have to offer some reflections that prevent my coming to your conclusions.

We are now at the gay and glittering Venice.

" And the CHILD stood upon the BRIDGE OF SIGHS;'

Does its poetical beauty depend upon the sea and canals?—Answer. Take the sea away, let it be of what colour it may, and even Venice would possibly be less poetical. But why canals? These are *dug* by labour. Take away the sea, and will not Venice, in its aspect, be *less* poetical? " Is it " the canal which makes it *poetical?*" Certainly not. For I can conceive nothing in the visible world, notwithstanding its water, so unpoetical as an artificial canal; to add to its interest, creeping, in a straight line, between a row of houses, with a palace on one side, and a prison on the other. The CANAL, or the Bridge of Sighs! Oh!

the Bridge of Sighs against all the world. The very name is poetical, and that of *canal* is quite the contrary. A bridge alone is beautiful and picturesque, and so far poetical; but the clearness of the water, the moving objects, the verdure, or trees, or, if you please, the *boats* near it, perhaps a solitary fisherman, make it *more poetical.*

I never saw Venice but in a "*picture,*" though I assure you I have seen the sea. A bridge in a city is not so *poetical,* half so poetical, as a bridge out of a city, or near the suburbs; how much more poetical Westminster bridge, for this reason, than, London bridge.

But the "Canal Grande" gives me only the idea of that *least* poetical of American rivers, called by the romantic name of the "Big Muddy."

At Venice, your Lordship is apparently at home; and I have never seen that singular and beautiful city, except as it appears in the paintings of CANALETTI. There, I think, nothing ever appeared so unpicturesque and unpoetical. How little do these paintings resemble in beauty the works of CLAUDE, where the admixture of buildings, trees, cattle, &c. is so *poetical!* It must also be remembered, in the peculiar situation of this unique city, every thing appears on the side of ART, and scarce any thing on the side of NATURE; one is exalted, and the other depressed. The sea, instead of rolling and rocking in splendour, becomes a great ditch,

divided into other ditches, and the eye is, *per force*, carried away from the insipidities of nature *in this* spot to the decorations of ART; and if art ever obtained a transient triumph over NATURE, on the side of the sea, it must have been in this corner of the Adriatic.

If I had seen it, I might paint its gondolas, sparkling in the sun, as they pass and repass each other; the oar, dipped in unison to the distant song, that rose over the waves; the sea, kissing, as in homage, the feet of his mistress, and putting off, as in humility, all his richest and proudest attire of beauty.

But I could not paint it as Lord BYRON has done; and something ought to be allowed to his glowing and partial pencil.

Having requested the reader to bear in mind these material observations, I confess, if Lord BYRON's picture be faithful, as far as we might judge from this *particular spot*, and under these particular circumstances, ART might have a transient triumph. Lord BYRON, however, must be heard.

"There can be nothing more poetical in its aspect than the city of Venice: does this depend upon the sea, or the canals?

"The dirt and sea-weed whence proud Venice rose?"

Is it the canal which runs between the palace and the prison, or the 'Bridge of Sighs,' which connects them,

that render it poetical? Is it the 'Canal Grande,' or the Rialto which arches it, the churches which tower over it, the palaces which line, and the gondolas which glide over, the waters, that render this city more poetical than Rome itself? Mr. BOWLES will say, perhaps, that the Rialto is but marble, the palaces and churches only stone, and the gondolas a 'coarse' black cloth, thrown over some planks of carved wood, with a shining bit of fantastically formed iron at the prow, '*without*' the water. And I tell him, that without these the water would be nothing but a clay-coloured ditch; and whoever says the contrary, deserves to be at the bottom of that, where POPE's heroes are embraced by the mud nymphs. There would be nothing to make the canal of Venice more poetical than that of Paddington, were it not for the artificial adjuncts above-mentioned; although it is a perfectly natural canal, formed by the sea, and the innumerable islands which constitute the site of this extraordinary city."

But if this be so in one particular spot, and under peculiar circumstances of depression on one side, and exaltation, and a colouring, perhaps, somewhat partial, on the other, the general principle is not affected, that "what is sublime or beau-"tiful in works of nature, is more *poetical* than "any works of art!" It might *not* be so in a particular angle of Europe, in that particular spot, compared with those particular features; but the general principle will not be affected; and I have doubts whether Venice, brilliant as she is,

might not look small by the side of the blue and billowy Pacific. I therefore hold it not certain, that Lord Byron has gained a triumph for the cause he espouses, even at this his favourite and unique city, but I contend, if it be so *there*, the general principle is not altered. The embrace of the Mud Nymphs, therefore, for the present, I think I may decline, with your Lordship's permission; and I was almost about to add, concerning this embrace, "DETUR DIGNIORI!"

CITY OF ROME, THE CLOACA, &c.

But from the gay and glittering Queen of the Adriatic, where do your Lordship's eccentric wanderings take us now?

To Rome, and the Cloaca at Rome! The city of Rome, with its scattered remains of ancient grandeur,

> "Fall'n columns, broken arches, spread,"
> "Spirat adhuc Imperiosa minas."

But, if cities are considered *poetically*, it must be for their picturesque, and so far "poetical," beauty, like Venice and Constantinople. Seen at a distance, when their appearance harmonizes with the sky, they are most interesting and poetical: the ART of the buildings is lost sight of; and a thousand circumstances of light and shade, glittering towers or cupolas, have an effect of making us entirely overlook the work of art, whilst their most picturesque features blend with the distance into the beauties of NATURE. But the distinction ought always to be kept in mind, of what is most sublime or beautiful in Nature being compared with what is sublime in art; and you, my Lord, without regard to this obvious distinction, take your city, and without discrimination of what

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is most picturesque or poetical even in a city, demand, "what are the seven hills without the "CITY?" As you make no discrimination, I will; a distant city is much more poetical than one close in sight; the intermixture of water or trees, as in CLAUDE's landscapes, takes off and subdues the glare of *nearer art.* The different points of elevation that catch the light; smoke here and there perhaps ascending slowly into the cloudless sky; these, and sundry other accidental adjuncts, make a distant city harmonize, as I have said, with the colours and beauties of NATURE in the surrounding scenery: place your city so near as to lose the effect of all these circumstances, your city will not be "so picturesque" to the eye, or so poetical to the imagination.

It is on this account, the line I quoted in the Letter to CAMPBELL has so poetical an effect,

"Fumum, et opes, strepitumque Romæ."

What an idea does the "*smoke* and the *noise*," give of the magnitude and multitude of a vast metropolis; but if the view had been *more distinct*, had all the buildings, as buildings, been brought nearer, the poetry of the city would be lost at once.

The very sounds of a great city, in like manner, become poetical, when blended into an indistinct murmur,

"And the busy *hum* of men." MILTON.

" For cities humming with a restless noise."
" Confusæ sonus urbis et illætabile murmur." VIRGIL.

If you come nearer, you may hear

——— " The stir
" Of the GREAT Babel, and the noise she makes,
" Through all her gates."

If you go nearer yet, you may enter with CRABBE into the alleys or lanes: the picture may be drawn with a faithful hand, and every thing set before us as it is: but the BEAUTY or SUBLIMITY in poetry is lost, and you of necessity approach to what is doubtless no less difficult to *execute*, the confines of the familiar. And so much in general of cities as poetical objects.

But Lord BYRON brings us from Venice, not only to the magnificent ruins, but the very Cloaca of Rome.

Even here I shall follow you. Who will think " this work of labour as poetical as Richmond Hill, " I know not:" that it may be made poetical, we have the authority of DYER.

" Such the sewers large,
" Whether the great Tarquinean Genius dooms
" Each wave impure; and proud with *added rains*,
" *Hark!* how the MIGHTY *billows* LASH their vaults,
" And thunder; how they heave their rocks in vain!
" Though now incessant time has roll'd around,
" A THOUSAND WINTERS o'er the CHANGEFUL world,
" And yet a thousand since, the indignant floods
" ROAR LOUD, in their firm bounds, and dash and swell
" In vain."

I need not point out where the *poetry* lies; and the reader will observe, there is as little about *art*, even in this description, as there was in CAMPBELL's ship.

APOLLO, GLADIATOR, HERCULES, &c.

Which way shall we now turn; for lo! not the hog's tail in a high wind, but all your gods and goddesses, Apollo, Hercules, &c. brought against me and poor Nature!

What an assemblage! We almost shrink at the entrance. "The Coliseum, the Pantheon, the "Apollo, the Laocoon, the Venus de Medicis, "the Hercules, the GLADIATOR," (I shall omit MOSES,) and all the HIGHER works of CANOVA, (why *higher works*, as HERCULES' club, if it were equal in EXECUTION, do I understand your Lordship, would be as fine a piece of art as HERCULES;) but these great works of MAN are as poetical as Mount Etna, and still more so as "DIRECT MANI-"FESTATIONS OF MIND," &c.

I do not think so; but whether they are or are not as *poetical* as Mount Etna, &c. I can bring "*manifestations of mind*" against them, manifestations of the ALMIGHTY MIND, as I have before said.

Why, if JUPITER himself was in your Pantheon, he would fall instantly before the thunder and lightning of the JUPITER in VIRGIL,

" Ipse Pater, MEDIA NIMBORUM in NOCTE, CORUSCA
" Fulmina molitur dextra:" &c.

Why is this JUPITER, as poetry, superior to any marble JUPITER in the world? because no marble can imitate that which forms *the most* sublime and poetical part of the picture,

" MEDIA NIMBORUM IN NOCTE."

As we are playing at " *Bowls*," my Lord, I think I can overset your marble gods; for if I bowl down one, all the rest, upon the same principle, will fall about us, like ninepins. I will call in no *supernatural* assistance,

" Nec deus intersit nisi dignus vindice nodus."

I will take the Dying Gladiator, though it seems rather ungenerous to attack any one after he is *down*. But as this is the most consummate specimen of ART, I shall examine your exquisite delineation in poetry of the same statue.

I have done this in my vindication against the Quarterly. I must examine your copy again, and more minutely.

Here, my Lord, follows your copy, but we must remember we are not speaking of the *statue* of the Gladiator merely as a work of art, but enquiring which is the *most* poetical, the statue itself, or your copy?

" I see before me the Gladiator lie:
" He leans upon his head his manly brow;
" Consents to death, but conquers agony,
" And his droop'd head sinks gradually low:
" And from his side *the last drops, ebbing slow,*
" *From the sad gash, fall heavy, one by one,*
" *Like the first drops of a thunder shower*; and *now*
" *The arena swims around him.—He is gone,*
" *Ere ceas'd the inhuman sound which kill'd the wretch who won.*
" *He heard it, but he heeded not.* His eyes
" *Were with his heart,* and *that was far away:*
" *He reck'd not of the life he lost, nor prize;*
" *But where his rude hut by the Danube lay,*
" *There were his young barbarians all at play,*
" *There was their Dacian mother. He, their sire,*
" *Butcher'd to make a Roman holiday!*
" *All this rush'd with his blood.* Shall he expire,
" And unaveng'd? Arise, ye Goths, and glut your ire!"

Let us examine these lines, by the statue before us.

I look at the marble; I see you have faithfully exhibited the " Dying Gladiator,"

" Leaning upon his hand, his manly brow
" Consenting to death, but conqu'ring agony."

A fine idea, which the statue excites in the beholder, and which you have so powerfully expressed! I see also, in your exquisite copy, that the

" Droop'd head sinks *gradually* low."

Following the idea excited, it may be so represented in poetry. The *sad drops* in the " statue" may seem to FALL HEAVY, ONE BY ONE, and thus you may describe the act of " falling heavy, ONE BY ONE; but when you add, like the *first drops of a thunder-storm*, you leave the statue as a work, and take the

finest part of your *poetical* representation FROM NATURE. Thus you make it instantly *more* poetical, or else you need not have brought in this beautiful comparison, which is as remote *from art*, as *thunder* is from a marble man.

You have made the marble drop blood, with drops that fall *heavy*, and in doing so, you paint from nature, not the statue. But what are the most affecting images? Following nature, you make the marble think, as well as drop blood. We instantly feel his increase of agony, as the dying Gladiator in his last hour thinks on his distant home, the banks of the Danube, his children at play; their Dacian mother, and himself, "butchered to "make a Roman holiday!" From whence are all these affecting images—FROM NATURE? these tender recollections? from NATURE; and why introduced? to make the statue *more poetical.*

If you say the dumb marble excited all these affecting images in the mind of you, gazing on it with the feelings of a poet, from whence are these pictures and images taken? Who does not answer, from NATURE?

I shall now leave your Deities, and Statues, &c.; for if what is here said be true in *one* example, it must be so in all.*

* The reader may compare with the statue of the Laocoon, the description in VIRGIL.

The same results will follow, and for the same reason; because "images taken from what is SUB-"LIME or beautiful in nature," are *more* beautiful and sublime, and therefore *more poetical*, "than "any images drawn purely *from art.*" "*Quod erat* "*demonstrandum;*" and, let me add, my Lord, "*ex ore tuo,*" from your own poetry, opposed to your *own criticisms.*

I think it best to divide the subject, for more clearness, into two parts; and I cannot better end this part than with the battle against your principal deities;—and I remain, my Lord,

&c. &c, &c.

LETTER II.

Mrs. UNWIN's NEEDLE.

MY LORD,

THE transition from all the Gods of Art to this humble instrument is rather abrupt; but it is important, although you have included it *in the note*, because we now leave mere works of art for passions; and Mrs. UNWIN's needle alone, in my opinion, is as much superior to all your Gods, *poetically* considered, as it is to COWPER's "*sylvan sampler.*" The affecting beauty of this image does not depend in the least upon being a needle, *quoad* needle, but upon being *that needle*, which, like the horn-box of STERNE, sets all the interesting circumstances connected with the sacred remembrance of the dead, and the bereaved friend, before us.

Does your Lordship think a spoon, *per se*, poetical? Probably not. Yet when the companions of the brave and unfortunate COOK, so long separated from their country, and in the wildest regions,

thousands of leagues from their native land, accidentally saw a spoon, with the name of London on it; their distant country, and their tenderest connections, from whom they had been separated so long, and whom they might never see again, were more strongly recalled to their recollection; and this spoon, like Mrs. UNWIN's needle, thus becomes *poetical*, not because it is a spoon, but because, under the peculiar circumstances with which it is presented to the imagination, it wakes the tenderest and most affectionate feelings of our NATURE.

But we had better be a little more particular concerning this one circumstance. Mrs. UNWIN's *needle* is, indeed, submitted to my judgment, with a kind of especial emphasis. "I submit to Mr. "BOWLES's own judgment a passage from another "poem of COWPER's, to be compared with the same "writer's '*sylvan sampler.*'" I will let the "syl-"van sampler" alone at present; it shall be all "twaddle;" but the comparison is not fair. You take pure description, and compare it with poetry that affects the heart and passions. I say a tree, *any tree*, is, *per se*, *quoad tree*, *more poetical* than any *needle*, *quoad* needle, or *quoad* needle and "stockings," which is your Lordship's association.

"I submit to Mr. BOWLES's *own* judgment!" A subject so respectfully submitted requires deliberation; and after deliberation, "I submit" the

following observations to Lord BYRON's *own* judgment! But first referring me to the stanza, he asks, if these *three* lines are not worth all the "boasted twaddling" about trees, so triumphantly re-quoted. I answer, Yes, yes, yes: worth *ten thousand* trees, merely as trees, visible trees, connected with no passions of the heart. But, after shewing that you feel the affecting beauty of the *needles* as much as I do, you add, "a homely collection of "images and ideas, associated with the *darning* "*of stockings*, the *hemming of shirts*, and *mend*-"*ing of breeches*; and will any one deny they "are eminently poetical, and beautiful, and pa-"thetic, as addressed by COWPER to his nurse?" No, my Lord: no one will deny, and I *the last*, I hope, that they are eminently poetical and beautiful. But what I marvel at is this, that this image should be so touching and affecting to your Lordship, with your associations, *darning* of *stockings! hemming* of *shirts!* and *mending* of *breeches!* Why, I could not extract the passage without *laughing* to myself, though I never read the stanzas of poor COWPER without tears in my eyes. I do marvel, that with these associations in your Lordship's mind, of *shirt*, *stockings*, and BREECHES! the image should seem affecting to your Lordship at all. In my mind, it is poetically associated neither with one, nor all, nor any, of these auxiliaries that art has brought in *versus nature:* the thought

of one or the other never entered into my head. The needles were associated in my ideas with the loss of a beloved companion, never to be seen more upon earth, and COWPER's solitary and desolate heart, when he beheld the humblest relic of her domestic cares.

These thoughts, my Lord, give the needles interest; and affecting as these lines have ever been, and will be, to all lovers of poetry and NATURE, I do not think it worth while to take notice of SHERIDAN's pleasant story of the poulterer.

Let us see the effect of your Lordship's interesting and affecting associations with Mrs. UNWIN's needles. COWPER's lines are,

> " Thy NEEDLES, once a shining store,
> " For my sake restless, heretofore,
> " Now rust disused, and shine no more,
> "My MARY."

Suppose it had so happened that COWPER had died the first, and that Mrs. UNWIN, being as good a poet, had introduced, in verses on her departed friend, some of the pathetic images, whose associations have such an effect upon your Lordship's sensibility, it would run, perhaps, in this manner:

> Thy " STOCKINGS," oh, departed friend!
> Thy " SHIRT," that thou so oft didst *rend*,
> Thy " BREECHES" I no more shall *mend*,
> My COWPER!

The " *true critic*" will not fail to remark how much pathos and poetry is added to the " shirt,"

as making it at the same time more characteristic of a *poetical* wearer, by being "rent."

To return. After your Lordship's triumphant sally against nature, armed with Mrs. UNWIN'S needle, in one hand, and COWPER'S "stockings" and "*breeches*" in the other, you seem scarce able to restrain your expressions of triumph, for thus, my Lord, flows the tenor of your exulting prose:

"One more *poetical instance* of the POWER of ART, and even its superiority, over NATURE, in *poetry*, and I HAVE done."

And now behold

THE BUST OF ANTINOUS.

" The bust of ANTINOUS," in your Lordship's animated language, is "*not* natural, but *super-* " *natural*, or rather *super-artificial!*" As a work of ART, of *statuary*, this head I conceive to be, if I may judge from rude copies, most perfect. But poetry and statuary are two things, as poetry and painting are; and therefore, though nothing in the whole world of art may exceed this head in marble, I would only beg your Lordship to endeavour to describe it in poetry. We are speaking of poetry, and not of statuary as an art; and with such enthusiasm, if you cannot describe it, I know no one who can. When you have put it into verse, I will examine it, and see how far your Lordship will, *per force*, be obliged to have recourse to *her*, by whose aid your poetry shines, as much as your criticism ungratefully decries her. You say, " the poetry in this bust is in no respect derived " from nature! It must be difficult to say what " the poetry of the bust is derived from, for it is " *not natural*, but *supernatural*, or rather SUPER- " ARTIFICIAL!"—*Byron.*

As I am not one of the initiated in these mysteries, but only pretend to be a man of common sense, this is all to me, I confess, as mystic as "Muggletonian" dreams, or rather, might I venture to say, like "*super-artificial twaddle!*"

"*Is there any thing in nature like this bust, except the Venus?*" That is, is there any thing in *nature* like this bust, except the Venus, which is NOT in nature? Do I understand it? Let the reader try.

"Is there any thing in nature like this marble, "except the VENUS? Can there be more poetry "gathered into existence than in that wonderful "creation of perfect beauty; but the poetry of this "bust is in no degree derived from nature. The "execution is *not* natural, it is super-*natural*, and "super-*artificial*." I know that every thing in ART must be ideal nature, possible nature, beyond common, existing, every-day nature. But the great prototype of the most beautiful "supernatural," "super-artificial" art, must be NATURE! The most perfect bust must have eyes, lips, forehead, hair, nose, &c. &c. "Yes: but nature never produced "any thing so perfect as this bust, in this respect!" It is of no great consequence, in my opinion, whether this be literally true or not. But your Lordship is a little hard *upon nature*. You are yet a young man, and in the course of your travels have seen a lady of rank, and I, though not such an

elegans formarum spectator as your Lordship, who have also had the pleasure of being once in her company, admit all you say. Yes, you, my Lord, in a small space of life, and, compared with the time that has passed since man was first created, but as a wink, *you* have seen, a British Lady, and an Albanian girl, nearly, if not quite, as perfect, with respect to form, features, countenance, &c. as the Venus. You must have been most singularly fortunate; yet, in your *circumscription of the powers of nature*, you tell us "nature never "produced a living face like this, or the bust of "Antinous." How do you know? But I do not care whether nature has or has not. Poetry has; and I will place MILTON's Adam and Eve, as perfect in form, in "*supernatural*, or in *super-artificial*" *beauty*, as the bust of Antinous, or the statue of Venus!

When I reflect on the ardour of your language, granting this bust to be that of woman, and made complete, as a whole "*supernatural, super-artificial female*," there might almost be a fear that your Lordship's love would resemble at last that of Pigmalion; but there would be no danger, for the moment your "*supernatural, super-artificial*" beauty was *alive*, your "*super-artificial*" transport would be over! The whole of what you say on this point appears so strange to a man of plain understanding, that I think I must have

misconceived your meaning. If I have done so, I shall be sorry; if I do understand it, I have no hesitation to use your own words, "away with such "*cant!*" such "*supernatural* and *super-artificial* "*twaddle!*" I here put aside this bust, as I have already made an attack upon your full assemblage of marble gods, the mighty machinery of your criticism.

I have said that statuary and poetry are two things. Statuary, as an *art*, is indebted to nature for only one thing, with which, indeed, she performs *her wonders;* turning a rude block into such a creature, *sui generis*, as now adorns the dining-room of Lansdown House, so beautiful, so perfectly beautiful, that I, Goth as I may seem to your Lordship, when I have the honour of being admitted as a guest, have sometimes forgot my soup to gaze. Art, then, is indebted to nature for nothing but the block; but for what is the statuary indebted to nature? for *all his ideas.* For though he might have been less fortunate than your Lordship, who have *accidentally* met in your travels so near a resemblance to Venus, as the Albanian girl, yet he could have had no *ideas at all* of beauty, except from nature; for if there had not been a beautiful human figure, and "*thinking* "*things,*" my Lord, like you and me, upon earth, had *other forms*, neither of us could have had the least idea of that beauty, the conception of which

is first required in the sculptor. But let the art and artist have done all they can, they cannot render their image as perfect as poetry can; for she can give to the statue life, animation, tears, smiles, language, eyes that shine, &c.; and for these ideas poetry is indebted to NATURE.

The bust of Antinous, which seems even superior to all your other vanquished gods, to Mrs. UNWIN's needles themselves, I fear, also, must fall, like "Friar BACON's HEAD!"

But as you have joined with this bust the "Poulterer's shop," and COWPER's "sylvan sampler" of *trees*, by way of saving time, I shall here say a word or two of poetical trees. Your Lordship does not seem to admire "trees." However, let us only remark that even Constantinople would be less poetical without them, and by putting them here together, the city and trees, I think I shall be able, not only to save time, but to "kill *two* "*birds with one stone*."

PORT OF CONSTANTINOPLE.

I have no doubt, from what I have read, the view you speak of is unique in picturesque and poetical beauty. But, my Lord, are there indeed no trees among the buildings? No golden cupolas shining to the morn? Much as your Lordship dislikes "sylvan samplers," are there no beautiful palms, sleeping, as it were, in the sunshine, like a beautiful Albanian girl? No dark cypresses breaking the white buildings? As to the sylvan part of the landscape, I shall ask permission to quote a line of my own.

..... "Sees
"Damascus' golden fans, and minarets, and TREES."

I put the "*trees*" into the picture, my Lord, not for the sake of rhyme, which sometimes more sublime poets do; (and your Lordship well knows that rhyme

"The rudder is of verses,
"By which, like ships, they steer their courses:"
HUDIBRAS:)

but I assure you I put in these "odious trees," not for the sake of the rhyme, but to break the monotony of buildings, and to make them more poetical; and I doubt how *poetical* even Constantinople would look without them; and to shew this, not being a great traveller, but having seen the sea, not "only in a picture," as your Lordship seems to think, but, in reality, I must take you from Constantinople, and the Hellespont, to that part of the sea with which I am most familiar, Southampton Water. The banks are hung almost entirely with wood, as far as the eye can reach.

"And forests sweep the margin of the main."

Now suppose the whole line was houses, would it be so poetical? I THINK NOT!

"And *chimnies* sweep the margin of the main."

If you say, the buildings, interspersed, add to the poetical effect of the *trees*, as well as the trees to them, I answer, "Doubtless!" But the test is this: which would be most poetical—a beautiful building without trees, or trees without buildings, on the sea-side? The bust, and the trees, have led me a little out of my way, for I intended to have connected "The Needle" with

HOMER's SPEAR, WARRIORS, ARMS, HELMETS, BOWS, &c.

"The shield of ACHILLES derives its poetical "interest from the subjects described on it."—*Bowles.*

'And from what does the *spear* of ACHILLES derive 'its interest? and the helmet and the mail worn by 'PATROCLUS, and the celestial armour, and the very 'brazen greaves, of the well-booted Greeks?'—*Byron.*

And now, if Mrs. UNWIN's needle and *stockings* will not much serve your Lordship, let us see what can be effected on your side as the champion of art *versus* NATURAM, by the "spear" of ACHILLES.

But why did you take the *spear*, my Lord? What can the "spear" do, if the "shield" could do nothing? The helmet, of which you find CAMPBELL has made so poetical an use in O'CONNOR's Child, would have done better; but not to quail under the SPEAR of ACHILLES, even in the hands of Lord BYRON, I ask you first, if the spear be poetical, is it *more poetical* than the warrior who uses it? The shield in HOMER, and the pastoral cup in Theocritus, are described at large. These great

poets were obliged to have recourse to images from NATURE to *sustain* the poetical interest of a work of art. But describe distinctly a spear. It is long, it is short, or, perhaps, *bloody*. Let us take the first arms that occur in HOMER, not of ACHILLES, but of a secondary warrior.*

Let us remark DIOMED, putting on his warlike habiliments. Now observe, for it is a matter of mere observation, how HOMER, by images drawn FROM NATURE, in connection with ideas of terror or sublimity, makes us forget the work of art, and rouses the attention; these are some of the animating adjuncts that make the picture MORE poetical.

The first thing that presents itself is the *helmet*.

" High on his helm CELESTIAL LIGHTNINGS PLAY!
" His beamy shield emits a living ray;"—
" Like the RED STAR that FIRES TH' AUTUMNAL SKIES,
" WHEN FRESH HE REARS HIS RADIANT ORB TO SIGHT,
" AND BATH'D IN OCEAN, SHOOTS A KEENER LIGHT."

Pope's Homer.

I have extracted these remarks from a few observations, written long before your criticism; there is none of your examples, my Lord, which I have not before attentively considered; and I must think, you have not so attentively considered them as myself.

* I have spoken at large on this subject in the last vindication, where I mentioned the images from art introduced in the Paradise Lost. ACHILLES' spear is an ash from Mount Pelion, as Satan's spear was like a mast "hewn in Norwegian forests."

I hope this will be sufficient to shew, that I do not wish ULYSSES to use, as in the *travestie*, his "mutton-fist" instead of his bow.

But suppose you had brought against me HECTOR himself, κορυθαιολος HECTOR! Examine the most interesting circumstance in the whole Iliad, where THE HELMET becomes most interesting: Need I mention the parting between HECTOR and ANDROMACHE? Every heart has been smitten with the affecting incidents of the passage, since HOMER existed. The child is in the mother's arms; and as HECTOR, going to battle, is about to kiss it, the child is frightened at the plumes, and turns his head into his mother's bosom: HECTOR takes his helmet off, and then kisses the child, who, εκλινδη ιακων, whilst the mother smiles in her tears; and I ask, which does your Lordship think the *most poetical*, the affectionate father, the tearfully smiling mother, the child that shrinks, or THE HELMET! I know what you will say in your heart, if you are indeed "*magnanimous*" enough, whilst you will admit the truth of what I have said.

As I think I have taken your city of Venice, Constantinople, &c. "played at Bowls," not, I hope, without success, among your marble gods, and even supported my case against you, whether armed with the glittering spear of ACHILLES, or brandishing Mrs. UNWIN's needle, I consider the battle nearly won. I shall dispatch some of the

most material of the other arguments as shortly as I can.

Your Lordship brings the sublime image before us, " Who is this that cometh from Edom, with " dyed garments from Bozrah."

I object to the dyed *garments* from Bozrah!! Had they been *specified* as a work of art, I should; but who thinks of the garments, when nothing is specified, and when the eye and mind are fixed on the terrible and advancing spectacle?

As to garments, now your Lordship has taken me to the scriptures, let me ask what is more sublime than this passage; " the battle of every war- " rior is with confused noise, and WITH GARMENTS " ROLLED IN BLOOD!" You have also omitted, in the passage you have quoted, a circumstance which gives an indistinct glory even to the garments. " He that is GLORIOUS in his apparel, " travelling in the GREATNESS of his strength."

I do not like to touch this awful and sublime passage, but must only desire your Lordship to consider what would be the effect of a garment from artificial life, a " *red coat*" for instance.

From the " dyed garments," which do not take off from the grandeur of the image the least, because they are not *specified*, let us pass to the garments of CÆSAR, and the dagger that destroyed him, for we are now speaking of the works of ART in poetry.

I do not object, nor ever should object, nor is there any thing in the principles I have laid down which should make me object, to the "dagger," or the "garment." The dagger is connected with ideas of terror, and is, *per se*, in some degree poetical; but a "*knife*" is not; and therefore, though I do not object to the "dagger," I object very much to the "*knife*," when Lady MACBETH says,

"Pall me in the deepest shroud of night,
"That my keen *knife* see not the wound it makes."

I object as much to "blanket," which renders the sublimest passage in the world ludicrous.

"Nor heav'n *peep through the blanket* of the dark!"

This I object to; and I object somewhat, not to the "dagger,"* or the "*garment*," which are introduced, but to "peep through;" and I object, for the same reason, to

"See what a *rent* the envious CASCA made."

But so far from objecting to the garment, when ANTONY says,

"You all do know *this garment*."

I think it *most affecting;* and how much more affecting is it rendered by the magic touch of SHAKESPEARE, when, in continuation, ANTONY

* The poetry of the "dagger" depends entirely upon its associating images. The dagger in MACBETH is sublime; in HUDIBRAS it is ludicrous; because,

"When it had kill'd a *Cheshire man*,
"'T would *toast* a CHESHIRE cheese."

(how could you, a poet, omit these exquisite lines?) brings to the recollection of CÆSAR's friends a particular and beautiful circumstance from nature; whilst the orator *affects* their *hearts* by the *distinct* image of the summer evening, and the very tent, connected with ideas of CÆSAR's glory, and recent victory.

> "You all do know this mantle! I remember
> "The FIRST TIME CÆSAR ever put it on:
> "Twas on a SUMMER'S EVENING, in his TENT,
> "THE DAY he OVERCAME the NERVII!"

Any thing more beautiful as poetry, or more effective as oratory, designed to rouse the feelings, cannot be imagined.

Thus you see, my Lord, I can turn SHAKESPEARE against you, as well as MILTON against CAMPBELL, and gain strength from your own quotations. Who that feels the circumstances I have mentioned thinks of the *garment* of CÆSAR merely as a garment? It is the poetical sentiment that fills the mind, and the poetical imagery from NATURE. But the case had been different, if the garment had been from *artificial* life, or too distinctly brought in sight.

I will illustrate this by a trifling circumstance. You recollect the passage,

> "Life is a walking shadow, &c.
> "Out, out, BRIEF CANDLE." *Shakespeare.*

The passage is quoted in an edition of the Tatler, as follows,

" Life is a walking shadow ; a poor player,
" That struts and frets his hour upon the stage,
" And then is heard no more.
" Out, out, *short candle!*"

Now every one feels this absurdity; and yet brief is short, and short is *brief.* Why has it so ludicrous an effect? Because, when the word "brief" is used, the mind is fixed *only upon the sentiment;* when "*short*" is used, it is fixed only on the CANDLE!

If these observations are just, and I believe they will generally be found so, nothing more need be said of daggers, arms, shields, spears, &c.; or the bow of ULYSSES.

The human *hand* may be poetical or not, as it is described. But a *fist* doubled up as in the act of committing *an assault,* complaint of which comes before a country justice, is not poetical; and I am afraid, my Lord, all you have said of "fists," and "fighting," and "*gouging,*" must go *for nothing.*

" It grieves me much, replied the Clerk again,
" Who speaks so well should ever speak in vain!"

I cannot put aside the bow of ULYSSES without one more remark. I have spoken before of the affecting circumstance of PENELOPE weeping over the bow of her long-lost husband. Do you think that the effect would have been the same, if she had wept over his *wig,* provided he ever wore one?

Mrs. UNWIN's "needles", were dangerous, and would have failed in any hands but COWPER's; and him you pronounce "no poet!" This is an αυτος εφη, which I could not have expected. He failed in HOMER completely; but your assertion can only be met by another. He was a great, a sublime, an affecting, and, what is more, a truly ethical and religious poet, my Lord. But he lessened the effect of passages of the utmost sublimity of thought and language, by transitions to the familiar and to the artificial. Who can bear,

"Who loves an hot-house, loves a green-house too;"

because hot-houses and green-houses are not so poetical as "green fields." And when you describe me as having "*a heart of gall*" for endeavouring to appreciate ("not *depreciate*") POPE, as a poet and a man, consider, my Lord, whether he be quite consistent, who talks of poetry without feeling COWPER's; who talks of ethics, without venerating him; and who severely judges him as guilty of a crime, the effect of that awful CALAMITY, with which it pleased the ALMIGHTY to afflict him!

But to return, for a last grapple with

ACHILLES' SPEAR.

ACHILLES' spear is the only part of his armour that is unworthy of him; and this you select, instead of the emblazoned shield, so distinctly marked as a finished piece of art. HOMER seemed to have paid so much attention to the other part of his favourite hero's armour, that he scarcely says any thing of this. But even this, my Lord, I can turn against you, as I did Satan's spear against CAMPBELL. All that is said of this spear is, that it is paternal, and was cut from the mountain Pelion. What signifies where it was cut? you might say! So, when you observe there was no occasion for the "Norwegian pine," when you liked the "ammiral's" mast, with which to compare Satan's spear, better, I withdraw from the contest, and leave your Lordship to battle with HOMER and MILTON as to the propriety of any poetical addition to their similies. If the "grey-haired loon" did not skip from the staff, he remains equally sturdy against the "spear of ACHILLES."

What I have said of the armour of DIOMED and others in HOMER, may be said of that of ACHILLES;

and without expecting a *coadjutor* in POPE, I looked at the note on the passage, and found these words: " There is wonderful pomp in the descrip- " tion of ACHILLES arming himself, &c. &c. He " is at first *likened to the moonlight*, then to the " *flames of a beacon*, then to a COMET, and lastly " to the SUN himself!"

Your Lordship thinks the execution of a poem *all!** This I deny; and affirm, that, *comparatis comparandis*, if an epic poem evince as consummate *execution* as a smaller poem, he who composes an epic poem, with this consummate execution, will be a greater poet, in every sense of the word, than he who evinces the utmost and most consummate skill on an inferior and less poetical subject. And I need not hesitate to affirm this, for it is the opinion of all critics, from ARISTOTLE to Dr. JOHNSON.

As to PETRARCH being equal, or reckoned, in Italy, superior, to DANTE, it may be the consequence of some peculiar attachment of the Italians to the name of PETRARCH; but of this they could never persuade me, though fulminated *ex cathedra* by all the POPES that Italy ever produced. And I may safely appeal to the universal opinion, not

* What! is the conception of such a poem as the Paradise Lost nothing?

only of professed critics, but of all men of general common intelligence.

One word more will end all I have to say at present on another subject,—the moral character of POPE. If it was not from want of "money" &c. that I wrote his life, and published an edition of his works, there is another circumstance that might have prevailed with me in giving my opinions, namely, a conscientious conviction of the truth of what I advanced; and what is biography, if failings are not to be mentioned? As to his "ethics," the poet, I admit, profanes the dignity of his high art, who does not apply the gifts he possesses to the furtherance of TRUTH and of VIRTUE. But I contend, that one epistle of ELOISA will counteract *ten thousand* of POPE's *ethical* epistles; and I wish your Lordship to look at that glorious passage in MILTON's prose works, where he speaks of meditating some immortal strain, and you will confess, that so far from thinking he was telling "lies," his object was high and holy praise to that Being, to whom he owed the power of praising him.

Whether it was wise to say all I did of POPE, I cannot tell. I spoke as I *sincerely* believed; that it was not *wise* to speak with *candour!* I have found to my cost.

FALCONER's SHIPWRECK, DESERT, HOUNSLOW HEATH.

What has been said, I conceive, will be sufficient to enable the commonest reader to see the weakness or irrelevancy of all your arguments. In looking back, I shall only notice shortly a few I have omitted. You have spoken of the poetical effect of terms of *art* in FALCONER's Shipwreck. Nothing can have a greater effect than many, in bringing us as it were into the ship, and enabling us to see every action of the men employed in the hour of horror. Nothing can be more beautiful than the description "*of weighing anchor;*" the description of the stately Britannia, and her riding on,

"The pride and glory of the Ægean main."

The other parts of the landscape are purposely kept out of sight, that every eye and every heart may be fixed on this beautiful object, as she streams on the sight, departing for ever.

But when you speak of the poetry of the tackle, bunt-line, clue lines, &c. do you really think these as poetical as the description of the tempestuous scene of darkness and distress itself? Do you think that when the ship is in the hollow of one of those enormous waves; when

"In that horrid vale,
"She hears no more the roaring of the gale;

do you think this awful and novel image is not ten thousand times more poetical than such lines as,

"For he who seeks the tempest to disarm,
"Must never first enbrail a lee yard-arm?"

Or,

"Taught aft the sheet, they tally and belay?"

Your cannon itself, my Lord, has smoke and noise, but does no execution. I have spoken of this in my last pamphlet, on the subject of the "devilish artillery" in MILTON. Your criticism, on this point, is sensible and judicious; but of your own cannon we cannot say, as one of the leaders did,

"The TERMS we sent were TERMS of WEIGHT!"

Much as I have said about the poetical effect of ships on their element, and although I have quoted your own striking description before, I cannot resist recalling to the reader's attention the animated picture of this kind from the publication before me:

"The aspect of a storm in the Archipelago is as poetical as need be, the sea being particularly short, dashing, and dangerous, and the navigation intricate and broken by the isles and currents. Cape Sigeum, the tumuli of the Troad, Lemnos, Tenedos, all added to the associations of the time. But what seemed the most "*poetical*" of all at the moment, were the numbers

(about two hundred) of Greek and Turkish craft, which were obliged to "cut and run" before the wind, from their unsafe anchorage, some for Tenedos, some for other isles, some for the main, and some it might be for eternity. The sight of these little scudding vessels, darting over the foam in the twilight, now appearing and now disappearing between the waves in the cloud of night, with their peculiarly *white* sails, (the Levant sails not being of "*coarse canvas*," but of white cotton,) skimming along as quickly, but less safely, than the sea-mews which hovered over them; their evident distress, their reduction to fluttering specks in the distance, their crowded succession, their *littleness*, as contending with the giant element, which made our stout forty-four's *teak* timbers (she was built in India) creak again; their aspect and their motion, all struck me as something far more "poetical" than the mere broad, brawling, shipless sea, and the sullen winds, could possibly have been without them."

This is a beautiful picture indeed; but the extraordinary circumstance is, that if I could have painted it, I could not have brought any thing in the world so much in favour of the principles of poetry I advocate, and AGAINST yourself. I will mention a few circumstances.

"The sight of these little *scudding* vessels, *darting* over the *foam*, in the TWILIGHT, now *appearing* and now *disappearing between the waves in the cloud of night*, with their peculiarly *white* sails, *skimming* along as *quickly*, but *less* safely, than the SEA-MEWS which hovered over them; their evident distress, their reduc-

tion to *fluttering specks* in the distance, their crowded succession, their *littleness,* as contending with the GIANT ELEMRNT!!"

Thank you, my Lord! Any one who casts his eye over the words I have marked, will see how much of NATURE, and how little of ART, appears in the poetry of this animated description; and I conclude this observation by turning the most richly coloured passage in your publication, my Lord, AGAINST yourself.

Whether the mere *brawling*, *shipless* sea, and the *sullen* winds, (as your Lordship, with the skill of a rhetorician, not as a reasoner, calls them,) could be as poetical without the vessels, I say not; but, when thus seen, and thus set before us, I fearlessly repeat, that to those winds, to that element so gigantic, against which their "littleness" contended, we owe the most picturesque and poetical part of the beauty of this passage.

I have observed, "that your own poetry laughed "at" your "*variable*" principles of criticism, and so animated were you in this description, that you must have utterly forgotten, whilst you wrote it, *its tendency*, which is to establish the "INVARIABLE" principles of NATURE, confirmed by yourself, on the very element with which you are so familiar.

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"Take away the 'pyramids,' and what is the 'desert?' Take away Stonehenge from Salisbury Plain, and it is nothing more than Hounslow Heath, or any other unin-closed down."—*Byron.*

I will tell you, my Lord, why a desert is poetical without a pyramid: because it conveys ideas of immeasurable extent, of profound silence, of solitude. What is Salisbury Plain without Stonehenge? Stonehenge is poetical from its traditions, and uncertain origin. (See WARTON's fine sonnet.) But Hounslow Heath conveys to the mind chiefly ideas of "artificial" life,—turnpike-roads, stage-coaches in all directions, raree-showmen, whose shows "thousands" would look at, who do not look at the sun!! carts and caravans, and butcher boys scampering on horseback with one spur, and my Lord in his coach, with the "poetical LIVERYMEN" behind!

Therefore, HOUNSLOW HEATH is not so poetical as "the Desert," connected with the idea of solitude, of extent, of sands moving in the vast wilderness; of Arabs telling their wild stories by moonlight, &c.:—these make the "desert" more poetical than Hounslow Heath, with or without a pyramid.

But we must be more particular, now we are come to

SALISBURY PLAIN.

We have been taking a delightful excursion, from Venice to Constantinople, from Athens and the shore of Greece to the deserts and the Pyramids of Egypt, as on ROGERO's horse, from the pyramids and deserts of Egypt, having placed me,

" Ut magus, modo Thebis, modo ATHENIS,"

you have brought me back safely to Salisbury Plain, within thirty miles of my own door.

And here it is almost time (for which I am sorry) to part, for the excursion has been pleasant; and if we have not quite agreed on the road, I hope we shall part in as good humour as we met. But before I take my leave, suffer me to recall to your recollection the first words of your sentence about the pyramids.

The reader has seen, that you have admitted they are not *so* poetical without the desert and its associations as with them. Now I have quoted my original positions *four* or *five* times, placed them before Mr. CAMPBELL, the Quarterly Review, and your Lordship, and I beg and entreat you again to remember, I never said that WORKS OF ART were *not poetical*,

(I must have been an idiot so to have said,) I only said the sublime and beautiful works of NATURE were, *per se*, *abstractedly*, MORE SO! Has the AIR of Italy, Milan, &c. affected your Lordship's recollection? "Works of nature are, *per se*, in what "is beautiful or sublime, *more poetical* than any "works of art."

"PASSIONS are *more* poetical than the manners "and habits of artificial life."

If you had read what I distinctly laid down, or, having read the first propositions, remembered them, your book would not have been so pleasant, but I cannot concede that any instance you have advanced, has affected my original positions.

Your gods and goddesses; your statues, busts, temples; your arms, shields, and spears, (not forgetting Mrs. UNWIN's *needle* and COWPER's *small-clothes;*) your prospects of cities by sea, Venice, Constantinople, &c.; your pyramids and pigsties; your slop-basins and "*other vessels;*" your liveryman; the desert, Hounslow Heath, (why not Bagshot? it is most poetical of the two,) Salisbury Plain, the poulterer, the rabbits, "white, black, "and grey," vanish at the waving of the wand of truth; and the grotesque assembly becomes

"Like the baseless shadow of a vision."

However, as we are got safe upon Salisbury Plain at last, it is time to make my bow; and I can assure you, my Lord, I look back on many of the

beautiful pictures you have painted with unfeigned delight, though still thinking my principles of poetical criticism not a jot the less "INVARIABLE," in consequence of any arguments you have brought against them.

There are one or two personal passages in your pamphlet, which it is possible, upon second thoughts, you would have omitted. Whether you would do so or not, I shall pass them over *sub silentio;* and hoping, in the course of this discussion, I may not have said a word to give the least personal offence to your Lordship,

I remain, &c. &c.

W. L. BOWLES.

Bremhill, near Calne,
April 14, 1821.

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POST SCRIPTUM.

I forgot to speak of a ship in a tempest as a poetical object; and this, probably, your Lordship may turn against me. A ship in a tempest undoubtedly is both sublime and terrible; but what makes it so? It is the intense sympathy with the terror and distress, that causes the sublimity: and do you sympathize with the people in the ship, or *the ship?* the men, or the *boards?* then your sympathy is derived from nature. If you knew a ship *had no men* in it, the terror, and those feelings which cause sublimity, would be lost. Let the ship appear in the tempest, and far greater sublimity and terror will, on this account, be given when she appears no longer.

CRABBE and COLERIDGE have both taken such a moment of terror, which gives an indescribable sublimity; because, an image from nature is called up, which shews you those miserable people in despair and agony one moment; in the next, the

waves are only seen, the storm only heard, and the ship gone.

COLERIDGE's idea is that, at midnight, he beholds a ship tossing, by one flash of lightning; another flash comes, and

"He sees no vessel there."

Whilst we are on the subject, allow me again to advert to that singularly affecting poem, "The "Shipwreck."

How does FALCONER contrive to make the ship itself an object of sympathy? By personifying it, as endowed with sense:

"Now launching headlong down the horrid vale,
"She hears no more the roaring of the gale."

The cause of the want of interest in the scenes and classic places by which the ship is surrounded, arises only from the double anxiety and sympathy with the mariners, and particularly those for whom we are so much interested.

Who at such a moment could bear to have his deep solicitude interrupted, by being called upon to contemplate even those shores, where

"*Godlike* SOCRATES *and* PLATO *shone:*"
(Shipwreck.)

As the scene rises in terror, how fine is the introduction of the ANGEL of the WIND.

"And lo! tremendous o'er the deep he springs,
"The inflaming sulphur flashing from his wings;
"Hark! his strong voice the dismal silence breaks."

Is not this infinitely more poetical than

"Taught aft the sheet, they tally and belay?"

In some cases, where nautical terms are used, the effect, I admit, is very striking, in bringing you, as it were, into the midst of this forlorn and agonized crew. Such is the animated passage,

"'Square fore and aft the yards,' the Master calls:
"'You Timoneers her motion still attend,
"For on your steerage all our lives depend:
"So steady! meet her! watch the curving prow,
"And from the gale directly let her go!'
"'*Starboard* again!' the watchful Pilot cries:
"'*Starboard!*' th' obedient Timoneer replies!"

Who can read this without fancying himself amidst the crew, and almost hearing the conflict of the elements, the words given and repeated,

"'Starboard again!' the watchful Pilot cries:
"'Starboard!' th' obedient Timoneer replies!"

But an image from artificial life puts to flight almost all sympathy.

"Fate SPURS her on!"

A few more critical observations occur on looking over what your Lordship has advanced.

Architecture.

You observe that it is the architecture of Westminster Abbey, that makes it poetical: the tower for "making patent shot," accordingly, would be equally *poetical*, if the architecture was the same. I affirm this is not so. Westminster Abbey is, and must be, poetical, from moral associations more than from its architecture. "The *object*" cannot be seen without these associations, connected with time, and the illustrious dead.

I say, your answer is that of a *painter*, not a poet! The architecture would make "the tower "for patent shot" equally *picturesque*, as an object, for painting sees nothing but the surface, but it would not make it as *poetical*, except in mere description; and I defy your Lordship, and all the

poets who ever existed, to make "the patent shot "tower" poetical, let the architecture be what it will, unless they keep *all its uses* and *name* out of sight. In using the word "objects," of course I imply "poetical" objects, which include not only the visible form, but the associations. Nay, Sir CHRISTOPHER WREN's additions to Westminster Abbey are not so poetical as the Abbey itself, though their "*architecture*" were as appropriate as it is inharmonious. I cannot shew the absurdity of a *poetical* tower for "patent shot," so well as by a plain instance—that of the "Old Minster" and the "Glass-houses" at Bristol! If a glass-house had the same architecture, to a painter it would appear the same; but try the effect in poetry. CHATTERTON, speaking of the spirit of ÆLLA, says,

..... "Whether .....
"Or fiery round the MINSTER glare?"

Try the effect of the other building, supposing its *architecture* the same,

"Or fiery round the '*Glass-house*' glare!"

the whole passage becomes ludicrous.

The Wall of Malamocco, Euxine, and Argo.

When I speak of the sea, I do not speak of the Adriatic, or any part of it in particular. You take particular *spots*, and ask, whether, in that spot, the

"*master*" that curbs the sea, be not more poetical than the sea? "*Curb the Adriatic!*" What must this strip of sea be to bear being "so curbed?" Its poetical SUBLIMITY must be entirely subdued, by Venice in one corner, and "*a wall*" in the other! Bring your "walls," my Lord, to "curb" THE PACIFIC! and you would do something! But the mighty Cordelleiras, of NATURE, only can do that.

The "Argo" entering into the Euxine must have been, indeed, a most poetical object; and I can readily feel with the poet, standing on the spot from whence the spectacle might have been first seen, repeating the lines from the Greek tragedian. No ship had been there before! What reflections, fears, and awe, would that thought alone create! But I ask, is the interest, even here, derived from the ship as a *work of art?* It is in part derived, no doubt, from the idea of the courage, enterprise, and mastery of man over this great element, in part from the beauty added to the scene; but the novelty, the awe, and other complex ideas, excite the highest poetical enthusiasm, which I should partake with your Lordship, but should not think my principles of the sublime of nature in the least affected by this instance. For, *abstractedly*, the Euxine is a *more sublime* object than the Argo; and if you admit associations, they must be derived from feelings of NATURE.

I find I have done your Lordship injustice in supposing the canal of Venice "*artificial*;" but the name alone is quite sufficient to destroy its poetical interest.

I think I have now examined almost all of your arguments.

The "tall" ship becomes "diminished to a "buoy;"—the marble temples sink to dust, or, opposed even to the mountains of America, appear as little as the Pyramids, scarcely seen at the bottom of the engraving called the "scale of "mountains;"—Mrs. UNWIN's needle renders not more service than that of Gammer GURTON, which was found in HODGE's "breeches!"—ANTINOUS' bust becomes fragile as the brazen head of Friar BACON;—and HOMER's arms, that make such a glittering shew, impose only for a moment, like the coruscations of a fire-work, which seems to add, as it ascends, a thousand stars and glories to the night, and falls down a "*bit of burnt stick!*"

So, my Lord, the airy style, the pleasant stories, the delightful pictures, the brilliant imagery, of your publication, are as beautiful as they are baseless; because, on the least touch of argumentative examination, they are reduced to nothing,

"Cum ventum *ad veram* est sensus, NATURA repugnat."

In fully, and I hope satisfactorily, developing my ideas on the subject of this controversy, I have thought it necessary to go into more minute detail, to prevent the possibility of future misrepresentation: having done this, and being convinced that misrepresentation must now be from design, I hope to drop for ever the controversial pen.

The "order" of classing the highest kind of poetry is not mine, and, therefore, not *arbitrary*; "the order" is that admitted by all who ever thought or wrote on the subject.

Lord Byron's code is *arbitrary*, and not mine. As to the poet being ranked according to his "*execution, and not* the branch, *of his* art," I have never considered the *branch* of the art as constituting a poet independent of the *execution*. I estimate a poet's character from both.

Though I hope to lay down, after what I have now said, my controversial pen, I do not give up the idea of publishing a volume on poetical criticism, illustrative of these remarks. If a single expression occur in the preceding pages, contrary to the fairest mode of argument, it has not been intentional.

The public will decide between us; but one concluding observation must be made. Your Lordship has entertained us with a pleasant story of the "*doctor*'s" HAT, alluding to my "*sensitiveness*" to criticism; therefore I devote what remains to the "chapter of the"

DOCTOR'S HAT.*

"Mr. BOWLES's extreme sensibility reminds me of a circumstance which occurred on board of a frigate in which I was a passenger. The surgeon wore a *wig*. Upon this ornament he was extremely tenacious. One day a young lieutenant, in the course of a facetious discussion, said, 'Suppose now, doctor, I should take off your *hat*.' 'Sir,' replied the doctor, 'I shall talk no longer with you; you grow *scurrilous*.'"—*Byron.*

Allow me only to say, that for thirty years I never made *one reply* to any criticism, good, bad, or indifferent; nor should I have done so now, if I had had *fair* play. But I must *hint*, that the "*doctor*'s hat," in my opinion, fits your Lordship better than it does me; for the instant your early poems were sent into the world, and encountered the rude breath of the critics, you *fell foul* of critics, poets, statesmen, lords, ladies, and, among the number, none received less indulgence than your present correspondent. You have admitted

* "HIPPOCRATES says, Let us be covered. In what chapter? the CHAPTER of HATS."—*Moliere.*

with what good-humour this *criticism* on my temper and talents was met, whether it was *more* than I deserved or not.

But your Lordship was "lazy;" and therefore the task of bestowing the "*heaviest*" and heartiest lashes, I find devolved on your friend the gallant and puissant KNIGHT OF WESTMINSTER!

Can I, then, pass over entirely this your *coadjutor*, now my lance is in its rest? I do not know whether HOBHOUSE or your Lordship wrote the lines quoted in the Quarterly. If HOBHOUSE did not write these, I find he wrote others *more severe*, and therefore I take them as they stand.

"If POPE, whose fame and genius from the first
"Have foil'd the best of critics, need the worst,
"Do thou essay ———
"Let all the *dulness* of a former age
"*Perch* on thy pen, and flutter o'er thy page;
"Affect a *candour* which thou can'st not feel,
"Clothe ENVY in the garb of honest zeal;
"Write, as if St. John's soul could still inspire,
"And do from HATE what MALLET did for hire."

.....

"If snow-white innocence, that from the first
"Has foil'd the best defenders, need the worst,
"HOBHOUSE, essay ———
"Let all the *pertness* of palav'ring prose
"*Froth* on thy lips, and *perch* upon thy nose;
"Affect a virtue that thou can'st not feel,
"Clothe faction in the garb of patriot zeal;
"Against King, Commons, Lords,—and CANNING,—bray,
"And do from HATE what SANTERRE did for pay!"

The gallant *knight* for Westminster and I are now even. I *should* not have introduced him on

the stage, but for your Lordship's specific information; however, though I have thus *glanced* at him with my parting lance, I hope we shall meet at the next Wiltshire dinner for CHARITY, with that entire forgetfulness and *good humour* with which I first met your Lordship, and with which I here drop the pen.

ERRATA.

Page 44, l. 8.—For " rifled moles," *read* " rifted moles."
77, l. 5.—For " κορυδαιολος" *read* " κορυθαιλος."
l. 15.—For " εκλινδη," *read* " εκλιθη."

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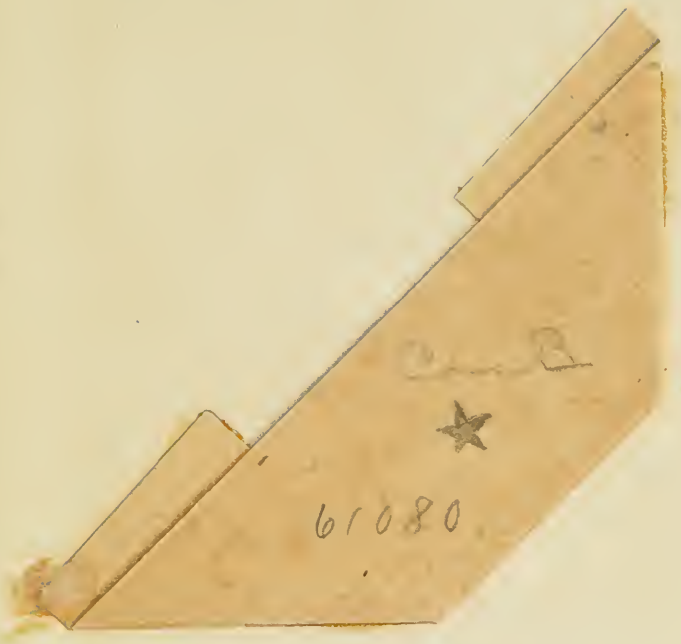
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